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shôjo

BASARA™

Story and Art by Yumi Tamura

Vol. 14

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Vol. #14
Shôjo Edition

Story and Art by
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In the early 21st century, an apocalypse turned fertile lands into deserts and brought human civilization to its knees. Control of Japan passed into the hands of tyrannical kings. Three hundred years later, a new hope was born.

At the birth of a rebel chieftain's twins, the blind prophet Nagi predicted, "This is a child of destiny, one who will grow to lead the people and be the light in the sky of our nation's future." The people of Byakko Village placed their hopes in Tatara, their Chief's son, raising him as the "Boy of Destiny."

With the tyrannical Ukon XV ruling Japan through his ruthless sons, a better tomorrow can only be achieved through strife and bloodshed. When the "Boy of Destiny" is killed by the Red King's forces, it is up to his twin sister Sarasa to lead their people in his name, or all will be lost.

Sarasa has achieved victory over the Red King in Kyushu and the Blue King in Seiran, gaining many allies along the way. She has also proven herself in Okinawa to the south and the Tohoku region in the north. Her closest comrades now know the truth about her gender; her confession has galvanized them further. At last, the rebel clans possessing the four swords of legend have been united.

Meanwhile, the Red King's recklessness has inspired a coup. After fleeing alone, Shuri has been forced to reevaluate his perspective of the world and start from scratch to prove himself a worthy leader. Determined to retake his capital, Shuri has snuck into Suo City with his comrade, Nakijin, while waiting for his newly acquired troops in Shikoku to be ready.

Sarasa has also decided to try some guerilla warfare in Suo City while awaiting reinforcements. A local woman, Renko, helped her but has been captured. Momonoi has tortured Renko and displayed her publicly before she is burned. Worse, he has broken the arms of his defiant son, Hozumi. While the rebels enter Momonoi's trap in hopes of saving Renko, Hozumi does the only thing he can—he paints for the woman he loves.

Sarasa (disguised as Tatara)
When Sarasa and her twin brother Tatara were born, a prophecy was made. "This is a child of destiny..." The people of Byakko Village assumed Tatara was the "*Boy* of Destiny," and Sarasa grew up mostly in his shadow. When the Red King's forces kill Tatara, Sarasa takes up her brother's name and fights in his guise, not realizing that *she* is the real Child of Destiny. Although she has finally confessed her gender to her closest allies, during past visits to hot springs, she has met a curious young man named Shuri, who has been her primary outlet for being completely herself.

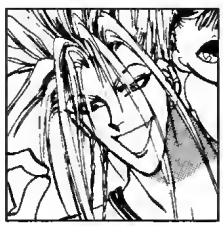
Hayato
His deal to pretend to be Tatara for the Red King's cousin, Shido, ended in disaster, so Hayato decided to join the "real" Tatara. He has since learned he's the descendant of Rasho, leader of the Suzaku, allies of Byakko.

Kaku
Byakko Village's military advisor and trainer, Kaku is loyal to Sarasa's family and the "Boy of Destiny." Kaku and the prophet Nagi have known Sarasa since she was a child.

Muratake
Rescued from a blizzard by Nachi, Muratake is one of the four elite spies who aid Asagi.

Hozumi
A talented artist whose work is popular in Kyoto, Hozumi is Momonoi's only child. His father has broken his arms for his defiance.

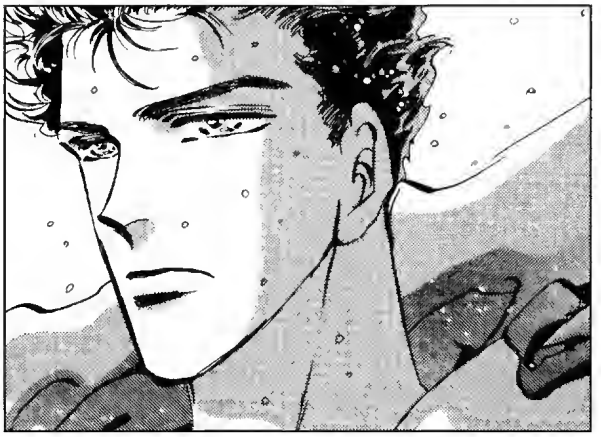
Asagi
His pale skin and refined demeanor belie his ruthlessness and deadly skills. Once one of the Blue King's personal bodyguards, Asagi allowed the Blue King to die, for Asagi himself is the true Blue King. Currently allied with "Tatara," his participation with the rebels is primarily out of personal curiosity and entertainment, not noble intentions.



Nachi
Spirited and daring, Nachi is Hijiri's second and the son of the head priest at the Great Kumano Hongu Shrine.

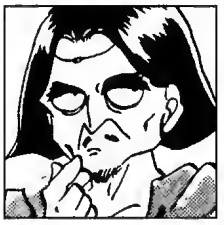
Momonoi of the North
Councilor to King Ukon, Momonoi has been given authority over Sanyo in the wake of the Red King's coup.

Renko
Seamstress by day, secret newspaperwoman by night, Renko has been captured and tortured by Momonoi. She and Hozumi are in love.



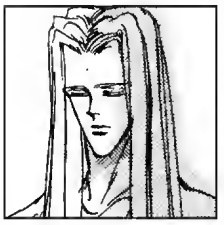
The Red King
Once in charge of Midwestern Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu, he is the youngest of the King of Japan's four sons. Prophesied to bring misfortune, King Ukon branded him a slave. Only a privileged few call him by his name–Shuri. Hounded by threats from abroad and his family, he was a ruthless but effective ruler, crushing those who oppose him. The destruction of Byakko Village is just one in a long list of rebel strongholds he has suppressed. But he has been ousted from his throne and is learning to be his own leader, not an extension of his father. Ignorant of her secret identity and hiding his own, Shuri's interactions with Sarasa reveal hints of his unhealthy family history and his desire to unite Japan in peace. He is now using the title "Tiger King of the Desert" and "Red Tiger."

Nakijin
Serious, kind and skilled in karate, he is one of Doctor Basho's pupils and a long-time friend of Yuna's. He has followed Shuri from Okinawa.



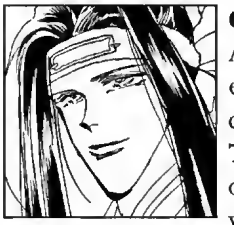
Asho
Once an advisor to the Red King, he was blackmailed into betraying the young king and has since spent his time in the Red Palace dungeon.

Hijiri
Learned in batto-jutsu—the art of the sword — he's the leader of the Tengu Faction, a somewhat radical group of young Hongu monks that has chosen to aid "Tatara."



Nagi
Extremely wise, Nagi is the blind prophet who declared the prophecy at the birth of Tatara and Sarasa. Also a priest, a doctor and a teacher, Nagi has educated Sarasa despite others who questioned the wisdom of teaching so much to a girl.

Sakaki
An up and coming advisor to the Red King before the coup, he has toiled faithfully on Suo City's aqueduct while waiting for his King's promised return.



Chacha
A strong leader and fighter, she was once a pirate chief but is now one of Tatara's generals. Captain of the rebel flagship, she was sent to muster Tatara's forces in Sakurajima.

Senju
Her lady-like demeanor hides this princess' passionate heart. Fear for her fiancé's safety spurred her to take drastically improper actions. A late-night visit to Shido ended in a secret marriage prior to his hunt for Tatara in southern Kyushu. She is now pregnant with Shido's child. Circumstances have made her a reluctant passenger aboard the rebel flagship.

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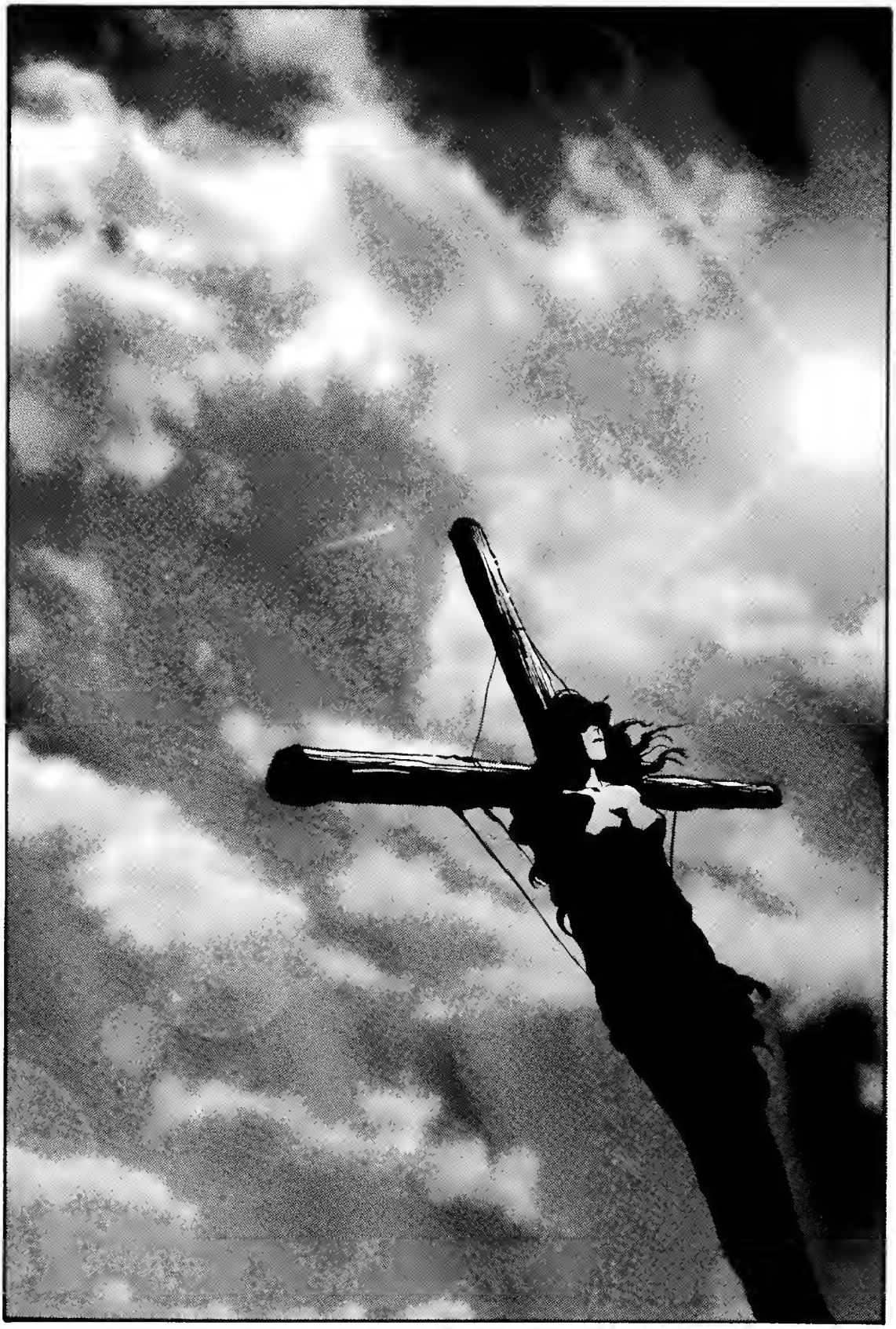
CRIMSON TALE 4: PURPOSE



TINY TAM-TAM TIME ①

Hi!
Thanks for all your letters!

Hard to believe we're at volume 14 already!
Please keep up the support!

AND NEW YEAR'S CARDS!

THE THEME FOR THIS COVER WAS "A CROWD."

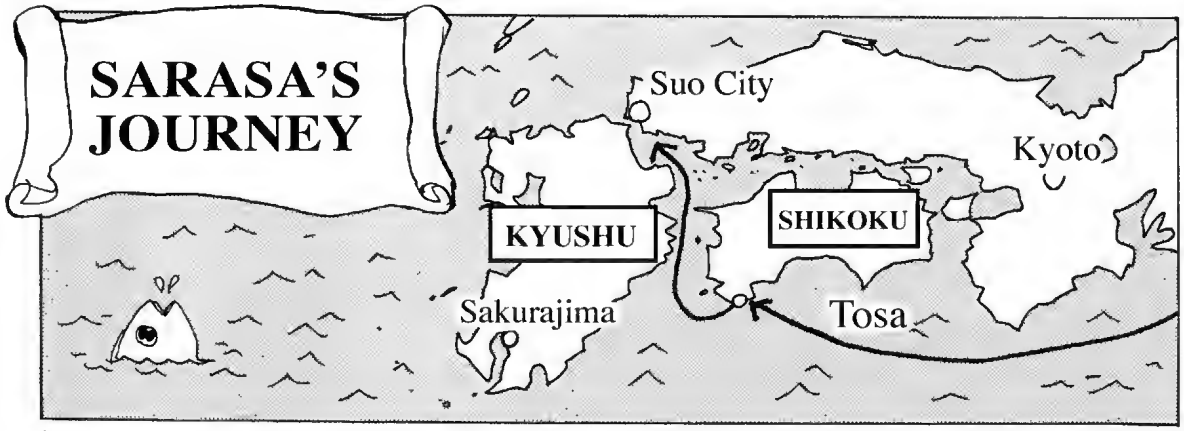
IT TOOK SO LONG!

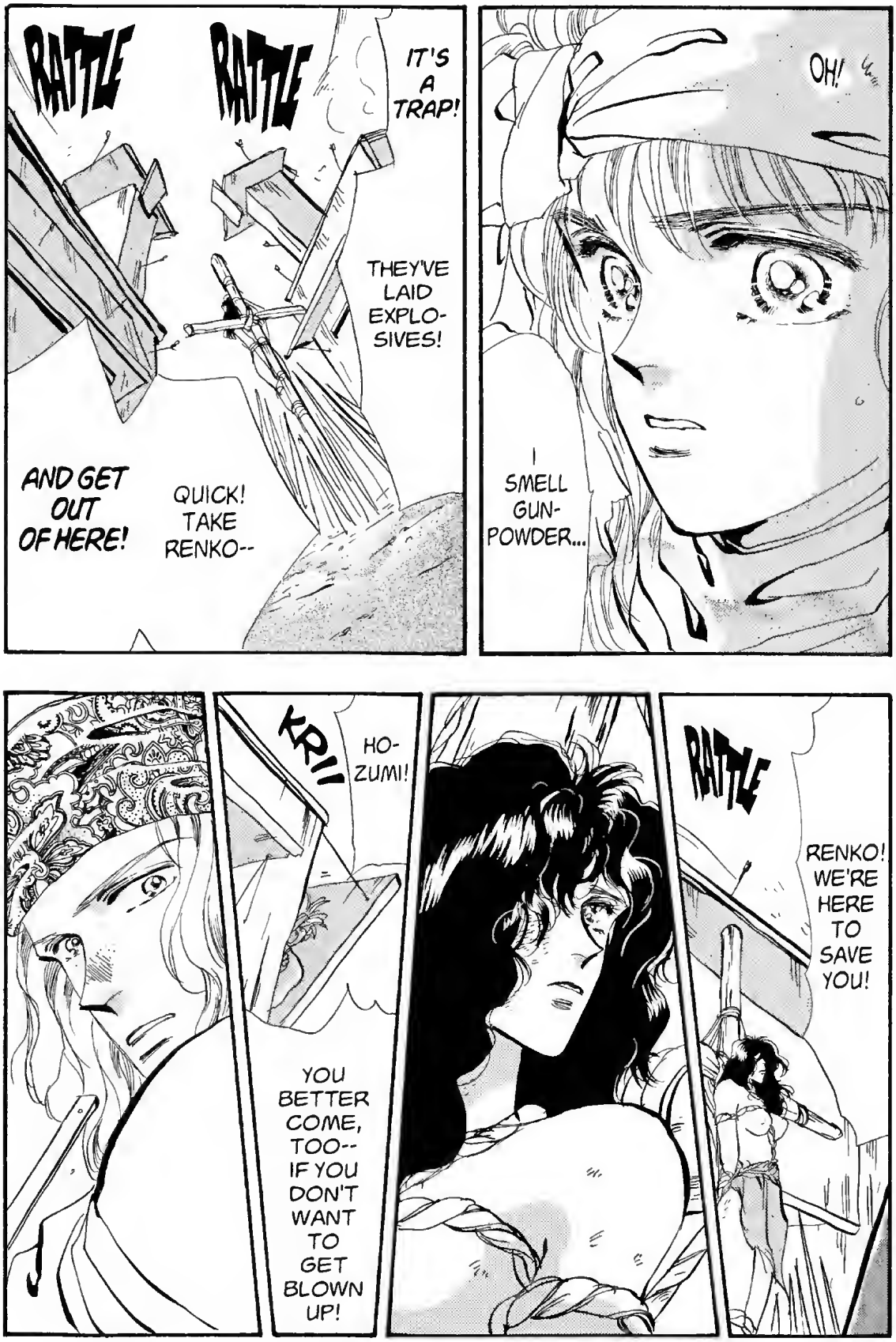
It's cold--
don't get sick, guys!

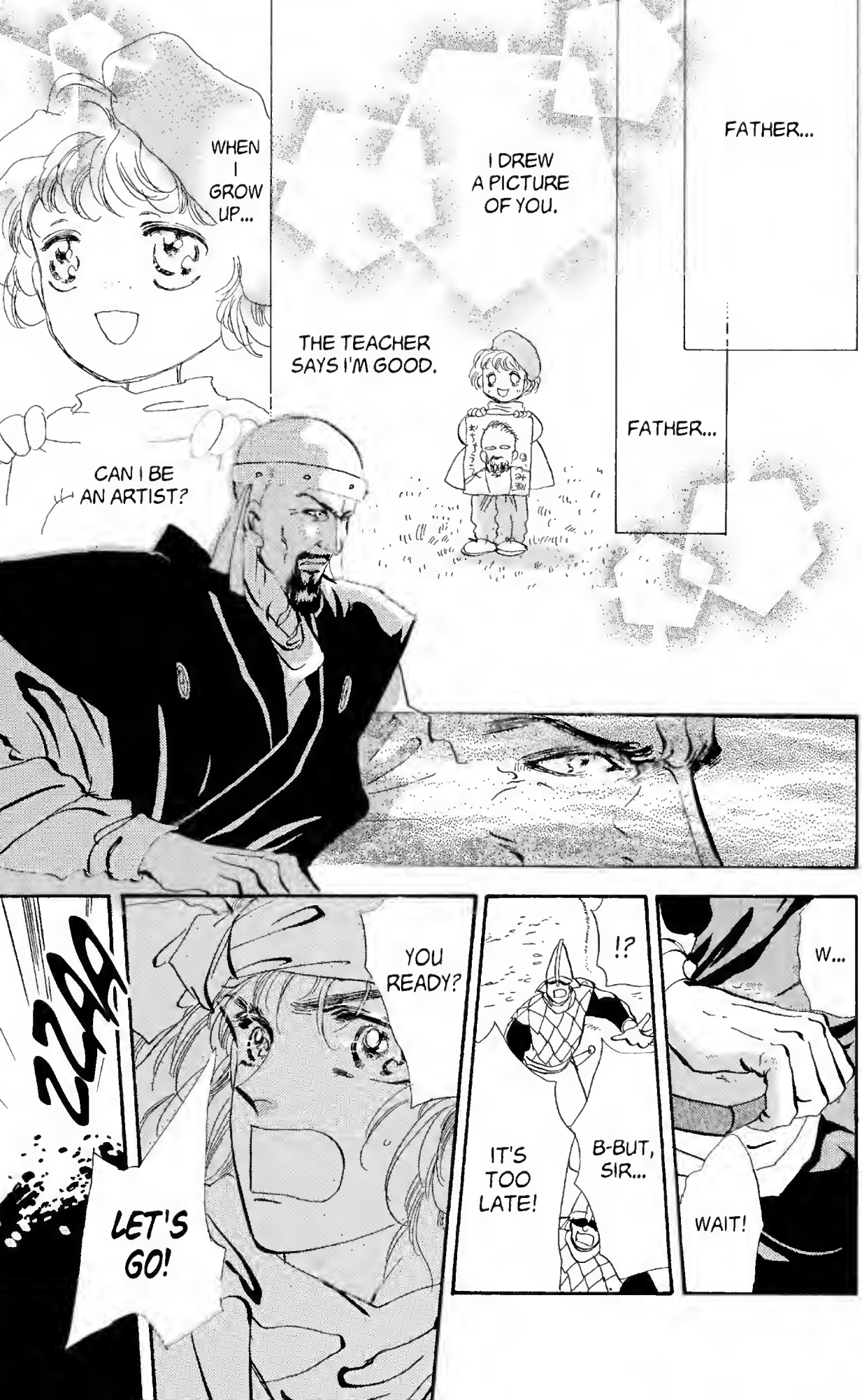
TAMU.

Things I love: ①

Snow Brand Camembert cheese




RATTLE
RATTLE
IT'S A TRAP!
THEY'VE LAID EXPLO-SIVES!
AND GET OUT OF HERE!
QUICK! TAKE RENKO--
OH!
I SMELL GUN-POWDER...
KRI!
HO-ZUMI!
YOU BETTER COME, TOO-- IF YOU DON'T WANT TO GET BLOWN UP!
RATTLE
RENKO! WE'RE HERE TO SAVE YOU!


WHEN I GROW UP...
CAN I BE AN ARTIST?
I DREW A PICTURE OF YOU.
THE TEACHER SAYS I'M GOOD.
FATHER...
FATHER...
228
LET'S GO!
YOU READY?
!?
IT'S TOO LATE!
B-BUT, SIR...
W...
WAIT!

ドドド

DOOM BOOM
EEE KSSAAA
YAAH!
HOZUMI!
BOOM
WHOA!
IT'S NO GOOD!
OUR RETREAT WILL BE BLOCKED!

DOOM
IT LEADS TO THE PAL-ACE!
THERE'S AN ENTRANCE TO THE SEWERS--
JUMP IN!
THEN LET'S GO!
THAT'S WHERE I CAME OUT!
DOOM
BWM

WHAT DID YOU SAY!?
DID YOU HOLD BACK?
I'D NEVER DO SUCH A THING!
AFTER ALL, YOUR SON WAS AMONG THEM...
DID... HOZUMI GET AWAY...?
HOW COULD THEY ESCAPE THE EXPLOSIONS?
FIND THEM!
WE'VE CAPTURED THE HORSES...
BUT THERE'S NO TRACE OF TATARA AND HIS MEN.

HOZUMI...
DESTROY THE BUILDINGS ONE BY ONE!
YOUR NONSENSE WILL COST ME MY POWER!
CONTINUE THE BOMBING UNTIL TATARA GIVES HIMSELF UP!

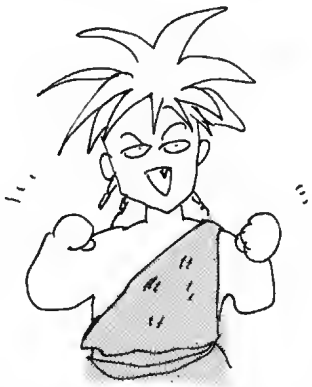
MY GOD.
MOMO-NOI'S INSANE.
LOOK AT THE PEOPLE'S FACES.
DOESN'T HE KNOW EVERYTHING HE'S DOING ONLY MAKES THEM ANGRY?
WE CAN'T LET HIM DESTROY SUO!
RISE FOR THE RED KING!
I'VE HAD IT!
THAT IS THE LAST ORDER OF HIS I FOL-LOW!
FOR THE RED KING!

HERE, RENKO.
DRINK.
THANK YOU, TA-TARA.
...FOR SO MUCH.
TA-TARA.
I THANK YOU...
FOR RESCUING RENKO.
BUT I WANT YOU TO LEAVE.
IT'S DARKEST BENEATH THE LAMP.
THE OFFICIALS WON'T LOOK FOR US HERE.
IT'S STRANGE...
GETTING INTO THE PALACE SO EASILY...

I DON'T PLAN TO ASSIST YOU PEOPLE IN ANY WAY. AND I DON'T WANT ANYONE...
TO THINK WE'RE FRIENDS.
WHAT!?
HAYATO...
WE SAVED YOU!
WHAT WILL YOU TWO DO?
IT'S ALL RIGHT.
AFTER THE SUN SETS,
WE'LL LEAVE SUO TOGETHER.
I'LL TAKE RENKO SOMEPLACE WHERE SHE CAN HAVE SOME PEACE.
AND SEE A DOCTOR.
HEH
ARTISTS ARE SO NAÏVE.
KRII
KRII
I SAW YOUR ART.
IN KYOTO AND THROUGHOUT THE KANTO REGION.
RICH MEN COVETED IT AND HUNG IT IN THEIR HOMES.
BUT THAT'S BECAUSE THEY WERE BY THE SON OF THE CHIEF MINISTER.
WHO WILL BUY YOUR ART?
AFTER YOU ELOPE...

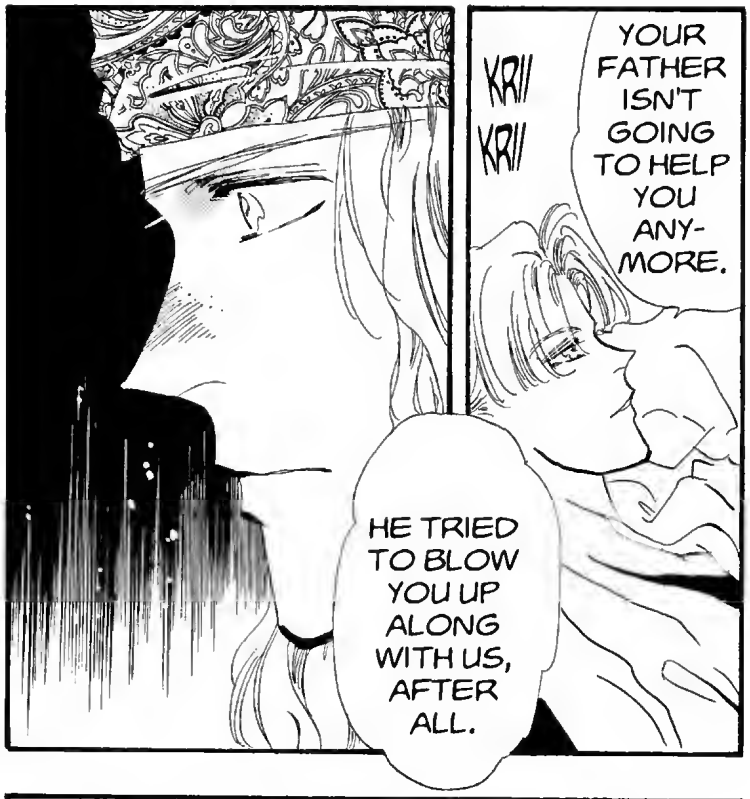
VERTICAL TAM-TAM TIME ①

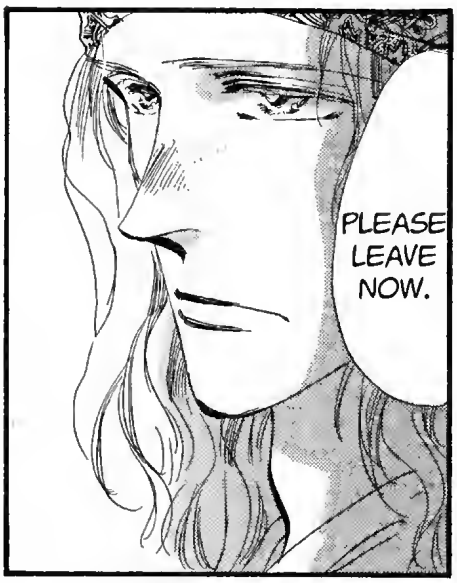
NACHI'S PROFILE:



Born December 2, Sagittarius.
Blood type O.
He's very tall.
His hair is naturally that way. (Really!?)
Hobbies: whaling
He's a bit scared of his mom...

THANKS FOR YOUR HELP IN THIS EPISODE!

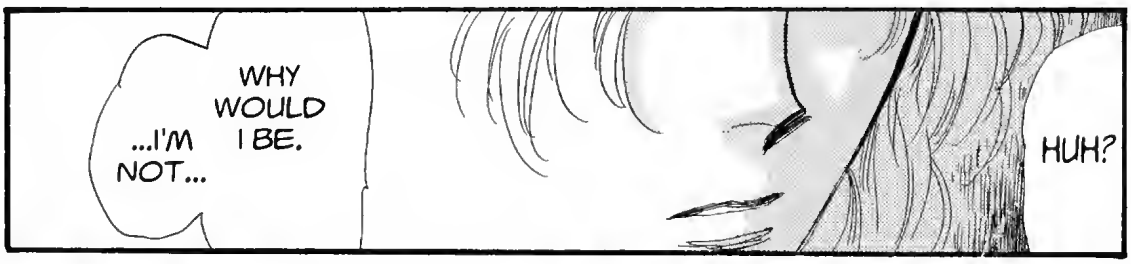


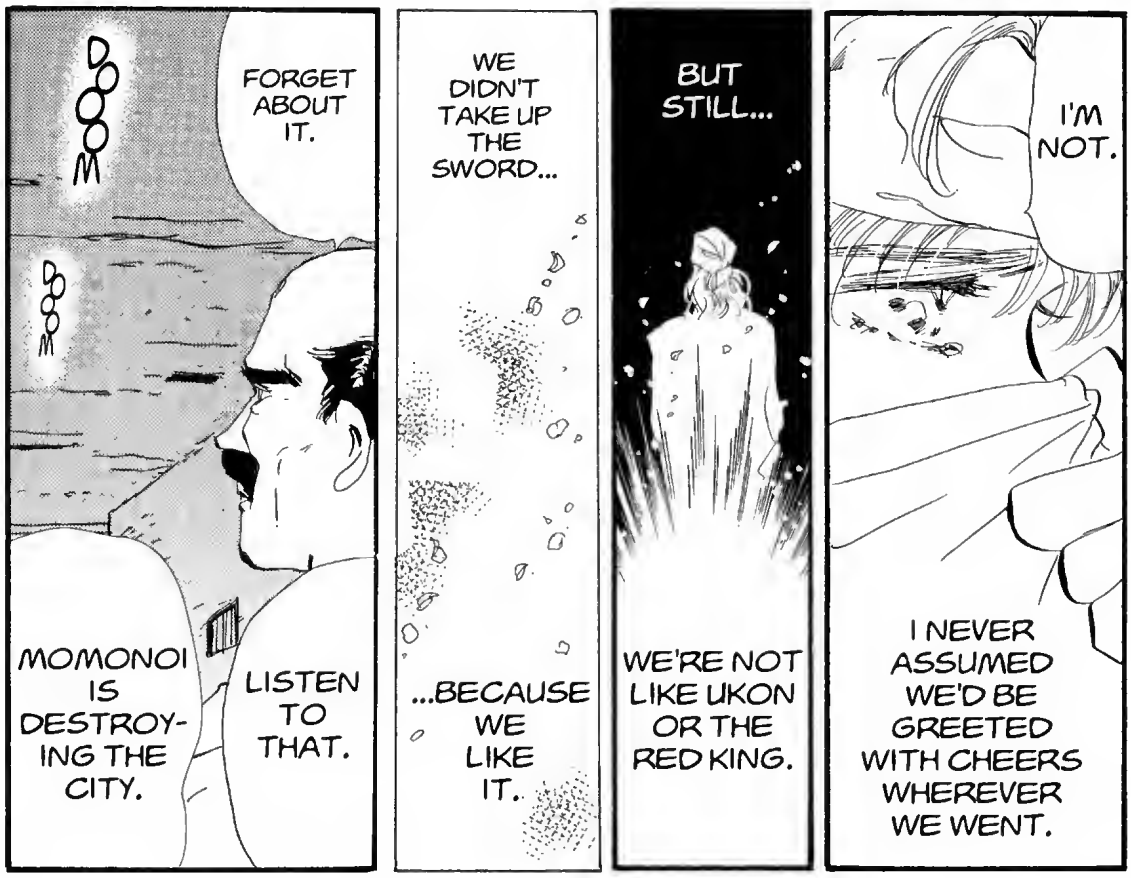


SORRY.
YOU'RE THE ONE LIFE'S BEEN SO CRUEL TO...
HOZU-MI...
THAT WASN'T VERY NICE.
...?
NO.
A CRUEL LIFE...
IS HAVING NO ONE CLOSE TO YOU.
NO ONE TO TALK TO.
NO ONE WHO UNDER-STANDS.
NO FATHER...

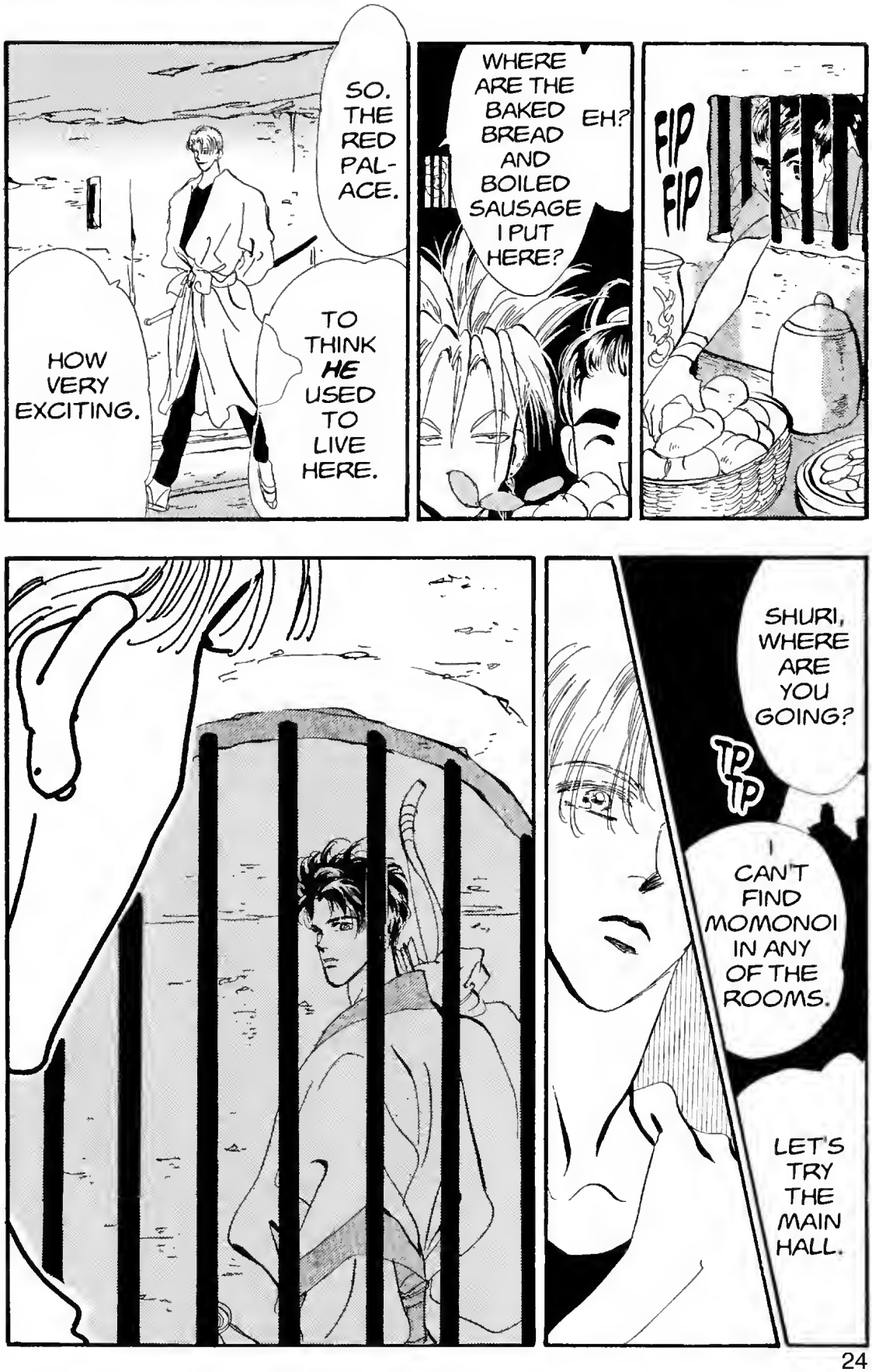
I THINK I'M FORTUNATE.
I HATE THIS.
WHAT?
I CAN'T HOLD YOU IN MY ARMS.
THAT'S ALL RIGHT.
I'LL HOLD *YOU* INSTEAD.
I'M HUNGRY!
DOES THIS LEAD TO THE KITCH-EN?
I'LL GO GET US SOME FOOD!
ME, TOO.
I'VE GOTTA SCOUT THE PALACE.
BE CARE-FUL.
TATARA...?

ARE YOU CRYING?


HUH?
WHY WOULD I BE.
...I'M NOT...


I'M NOT.
I NEVER ASSUMED WE'D BE GREETED WITH CHEERS WHEREVER WE WENT.
BUT STILL...
WE'RE NOT LIKE UKON OR THE RED KING.
WE DIDN'T TAKE UP THE SWORD...
...BECAUSE WE LIKE IT.
FORGET ABOUT IT.
DOOM
DOOM
MOMONOI IS DESTROY-ING THE CITY.
LISTEN TO THAT.

KAKU...
YOU'RE TALKING LIKE NAGI.
DOOM
IF YOU CAN WALK AWAY...
THEN PUT DOWN YOUR SWORD...
AFTER HEARING THAT...
AND GO BACK TO FARMING.
WELL.
LECTURING?
AM I?
YOU JUST HAVE TO BELIEVE IN YOURSELF.
NAGI!
I DO... BUT I'M ALWAYS DOUBTING.
SHURI...
DON'T HESITATE.
BELIEVE IN YOURSELF.
DON'T SUCCUMB.

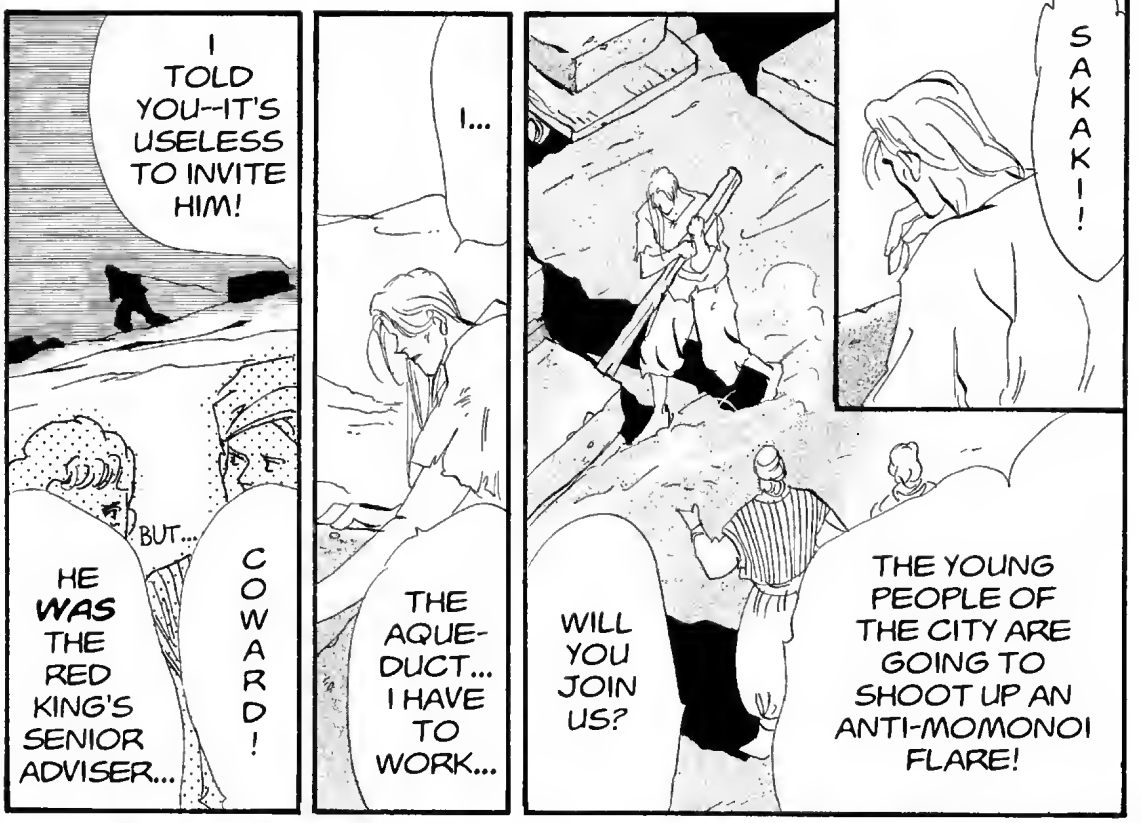

SO. THE RED PAL-ACE.
TO THINK HE USED TO LIVE HERE.
HOW VERY EXCITING.
WHERE ARE THE BAKED BREAD AND BOILED SAUSAGE I PUT HERE?
EH?
FIP FIP
SHURI, WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
TP TP
I CAN'T FIND MOMONOI IN ANY OF THE ROOMS.
LET'S TRY THE MAIN HALL.

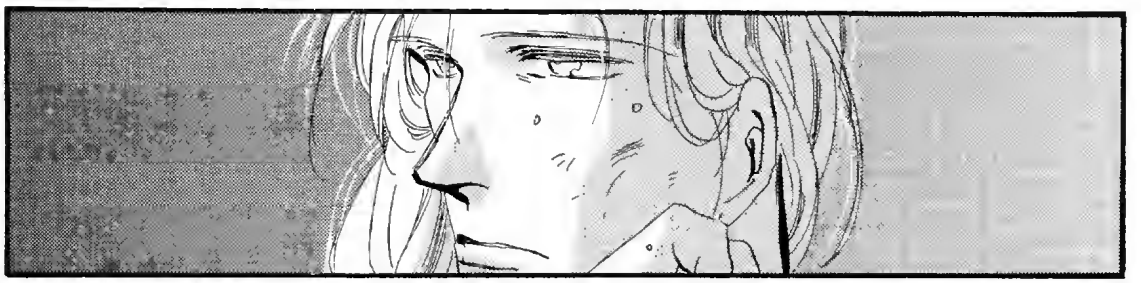
SHURI!
ASAGI!
WHAT'S THIS!?
HSH
HUP!
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING HERE!?

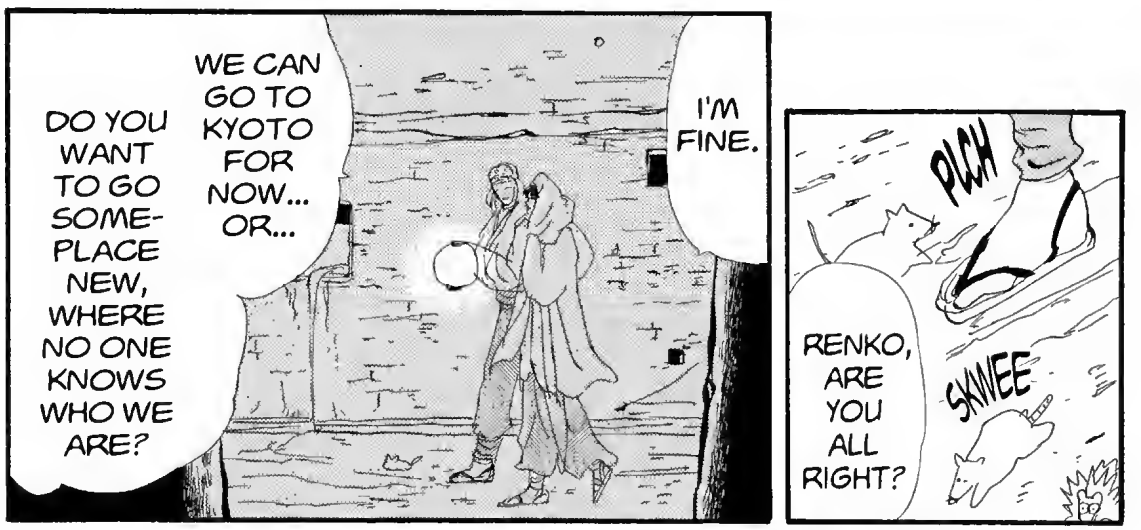
YOU NEVER CHANGE... MADDEN-INGLY ENOUGH.
STILL AS BUSY AS A FOOL.
IF YOU'RE HERE--
THEN SO IS TATARA!
YOU THINK?
SHURI, WHO'S THIS?
THE ONE WHO CURSED ME TO CRAWLING THROUGH THESE HOLES IN THE WALLS!
THEN I'LL PUT A NEW CURSE ON YOU.
...BY THE ONE YOU TRUST THE MOST.
YOU WILL BE BETRAYED...
VERY SOON...

DAMN!
CHING
WE'VE GOT TO HURRY.
TATARA'S HERE ALREADY.
SHH!
SHURI!
SHH!
ASAGI!
HAVE FUN!
BASTARD!
ASAGI, STOP!
WHOEVER TAKES MOMO-NOI'S HEAD--
WILL TAKE SUO!
I'LL PUT A NEW CURSE ON YOU.
THE ONE I TRUST THE MOST...?
WHO WAS HE TALKING ABOUT...?

SUFFER!
RED KING, YOU WILL SUFFER--
AND DIE!
SO SHURI'S HERE, TOO.
STARTLED ME.
BBMP BBMP
HIS TIMING ALWAYS WAS SUPERB.
THE DRAMA...
BRR
BRR
...UNFOLDS.


SAKAK!!
THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF THE CITY ARE GOING TO SHOOT UP AN ANTI-MOMONOI FLARE!
WILL YOU JOIN US?
I...
THE AQUE-DUCT... I HAVE TO WORK...
I TOLD YOU--IT'S USELESS TO INVITE HIM!
BUT...
HE WAS THE RED KING'S SENIOR ADVISER...
COWARD!



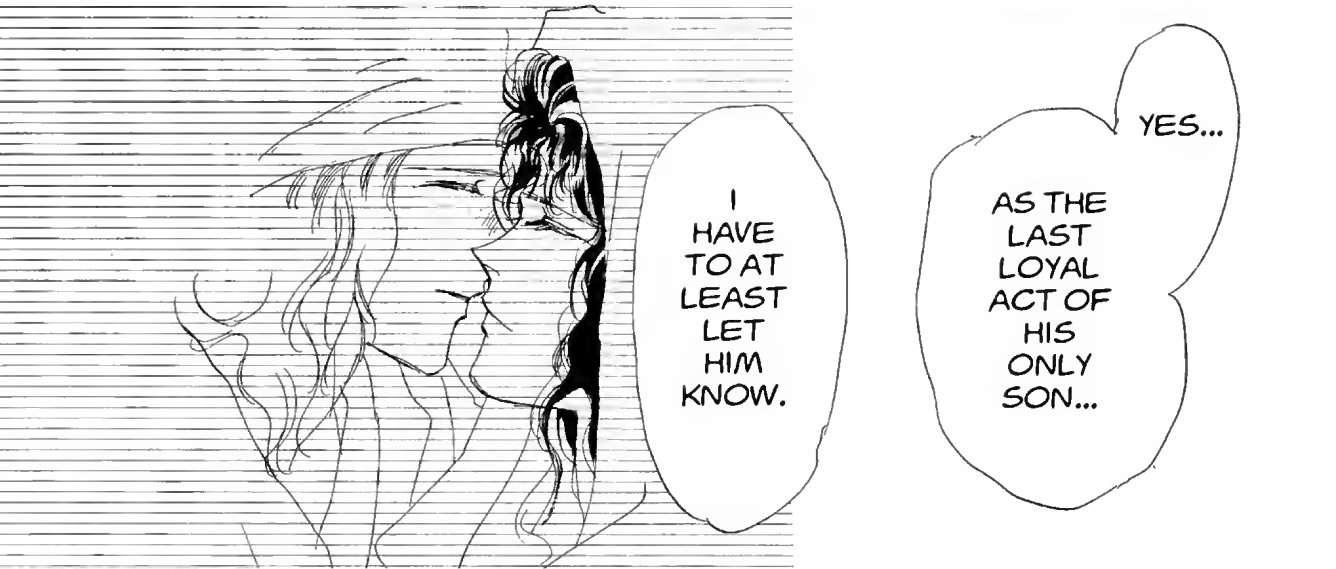

I'M FINE.
WE CAN GO TO KYOTO FOR NOW... OR...
DO YOU WANT TO GO SOME-PLACE NEW, WHERE NO ONE KNOWS WHO WE ARE?
PICH
SKWEE
RENKO, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

IT'S ONLY PAINT.
MY RED PAINT MUST'VE LEAKED.
HOZU-MI!
EH?!
OH...
MY ARMS ARE BROKEN, BUT...
ARE YOU HURT!? THERE'S BLOOD...
IT'S SO FAR.
KYOTO?
RENKO?
IT'S NOTHING...
NOTHING...
IT'S JUST PAINT.
WHAT'S WRONG?

PISH
PASH
PISH
THIS IS OUR CHANCE!
WE CAN TAKE HIM WITH THE MEN WE HAVE!
PSH
MOMO-NOI'S IN THE MAIN HALL.
MOST OF HIS MEN ARE OUT HUNTING TATARA. SECURITY'S LIGHT.
PISH
PASH
PISH
KILL MOMONOI!
TM
TM
TM
DAD...
RED CLOAKS.
...OF THE RED KING.
EX-SOL-DIERS...

DAD!

I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING.
REN-KO?
DO WHAT YOU HAVE TO.
I'LL BE WAITING FOR YOU HERE.
JUST REMEM-BER...
YOU CAN'T USE YOUR ARMS.
REN-KO, I...


YES...
AS THE LAST LOYAL ACT OF HIS ONLY SON...
I HAVE TO AT LEAST LET HIM KNOW.

THERE IS AN ANCIENT NOH DANCE FROM THIS REGION...

THEY SAY IT SUMMONS THE GHOST OF AN ANCIENT WARRIOR, CLAD IN WHITE, FROM A WELL.

WHO ARE YOU TAKING AWAY!?
PTUNK
AS RED...
RED PAINT...
PTNK
RED PAINT.
...AS BLOOD.
HOZU-MI...
OH, HOZU-MI...

PEOPLE IN THE CITY MUST BE HIDING THEM.
THEN LOCK THEM UP!
THE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE RISING AGAINST YOU, AND...
GAH!
WHAT!?
YOU CAN'T FIND THEM!?
NOT TATARA OR MY SON!?

WHAT'S THIS!?
YOU'RE THE SENTRIES! YOU'RE OUT OF UNIFORM!
WE DECLINE TO SERVE UNDER YOU ANYMORE.
FOR YOU, THIS MAY BE JUST A CITY IN THE DESERT--
BUT FOR US--
CHK
AND FOR THE RED KING--
SUO IS OUR JEWEL!
TRAITORS!
YOU FORGET YOUR DUTY!
OUR DUTY REMAINS--
TO THE RED KING!
SKRRK
KAG
AGH!
PREPARE YOURSELF!
REBELLION!
THERE'S A REBELLION!
GUARDS!

RAAAA
KANG
KANG
KANG
KANG
YAAA
TATARA!
I HEAR SOME-THING--!
LET'S GO!
SHU-RI!
THE MAIN HALL!
GRR!
DAMN THESE IRON BARS--!
DAD!

USE YOUR BOWS!
MOMONOI IS A SKILLED SWORDS-MAN!
DAD...
IF I COULD USE MY ARMS...
IF I COULD...
...FIND A SWORD...
WOULD I STILL BE ABLE TO SAY...
THAT I WOULD NEVER FIGHT?

HOZUMI!?
DON'T YOU FEEL SORRY FOR HIM? HE'S YOUR FATHER!
HIS ONLY SON--
CAN'T HELP HIM WHEN HE NEEDS IT MOST?

HOZUMI!
GYAAAAA
...SEE, DAD?
I TOLD YOU SO.
YOU'VE SHED... TOO MUCH BLOOD. OUR DEEDS...
THEY COME BACK... ...TO HAUNT US. ALWAYS.

YOU WERE SUCH A KIND FATHER.
WHEN MOTHER DIED...
WHEN I WAS LITTLE...
WHEN I SAID I WANTED TO BE AN ARTIST...
YOU CLAPPED YOUR HANDS WITH JOY.
YOU PRAISED ME.
WHY COULDN'T IT STAY THAT WAY?
KYOTO...
REN...
SHE'S WAITING... FOR ME...
LET'S GO TO...
KYOTO.
REN-KO...
RENKO...
OH...
I HAVE TO GO.
WHY CAN'T PEOPLE STAY...

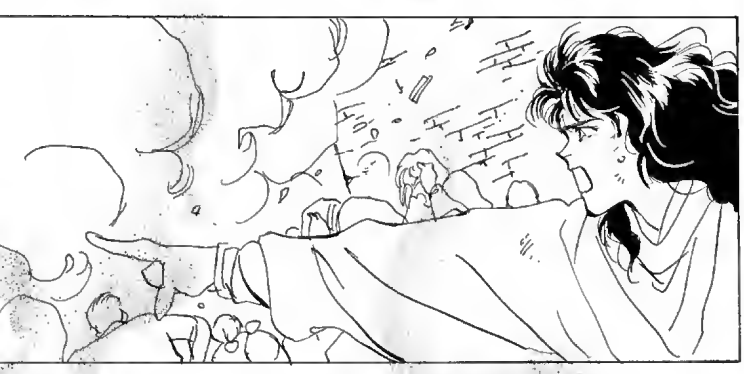
KYOTO IS SO FAR AWAY.
LIKE A MIRAGE.
I DIDN'T THINK...
WE'D EVER MAKE IT THERE.
AAAAAAA
MY SON!
HOW DARE YOU TAKE MY SON!?
DESTROY IT ALL!
I'D RATHER TURN THIS CITY BACK TO SAND--
THAN RETURN IT TO THE RED KING!
LIGHT THE FUSES!
BLOW IT UP!
RENKO!
WE HAVE TO WARN THE PEOPLE....
HELP ME, TATARA.
YES!
EVERY-ONE-HURRY!

HEY.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
AND WHO ARE YOU!?
MY LORD! YOU THINK YOUR SON WOULD WANT THIS!?
STOP THE BOMB-ING!
S-
SIRE!?
THE KING!
YOU'VE COME BACK!?
...RED KING!?

HEY, MOMO-NOI.
DO YOU KNOW AN UNTEN IN OKINAWA?
UNTEN...?
DON'T TALK TO ME ABOUT THAT TRAITOR!
YOU HEARD HIM, NAKIJIN.
SEND HIM TO HIS GRAVE.
MY BRO-THER...
HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS SCUM.
I SEE YOU "TOOK CARE" OF SUO WHILE I WAS GONE.
REST IN PEACE, MOMONOI!
THEN I'LL DO IT.

THD
MOMONOI IS STILL KING UKON'S MINISTER.
THERE WILL BE TROUBLE IF THE RED KING HAS A HAND IN HIS DEATH.
LET AN INSIGNIFI-CANT TOWNSMAN DISPATCH HIM.
STILL FRETTING EVERY DETAIL, AREN'T YOU...

DDOOOM
DOOM
BOOM
DMM
KRSSH
BWM



...SAKAKI?
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU.

I WISH I COULD SHOW IT TO YOU, RENKO.
KYOTO...
SOMETIMES SNOW IN WINTER.
CHERRY BLOSSOMS IN THE SPRING...
BEAUTIFUL.
IT'S SO...
...PROMISE.
I...
WAAA
SNIFF
WITH YOU, I'LL WANT TO LOOK AT EVERYTHING.
TOGETHER, WE'LL PRINT A NEWSPAPER.
WE'LL DISTRIBUTE IT TO THE WHOLE COUNTRY.
BUT...
I THINK I ONLY SAW THE BEAUTY.

YES.
LET'S GO.
THIS TIME...
WE'LL BE TOGETHER...

WAA
WAAA
WAA
RENKO...
WHY...?
LOOK, TATARA.
HOZUMI'S PAINTING.
WHY DID YOU HAVE TO DIE...?
WAAA

SHE LOOKS...
...SO HAPPY.
BUT CAN DEATH...
...POSSIBLY BE HAPPY?
...THE PAINTING IS EMBRACING HER.
IT'S AS IF...

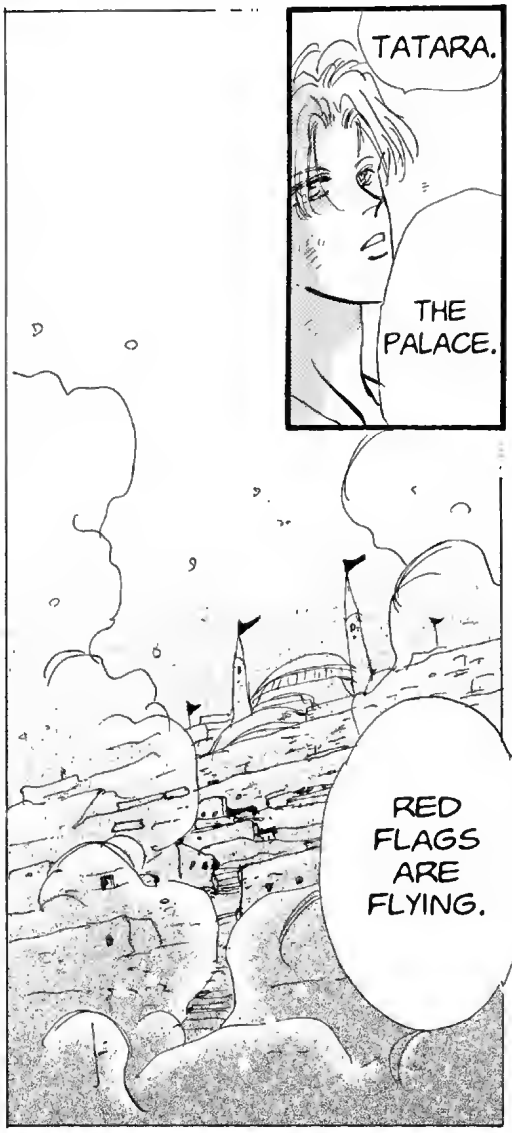
NO. THEY CAN'T BE HAPPY.

DOOM
TATA-RA?
THE RED KING!

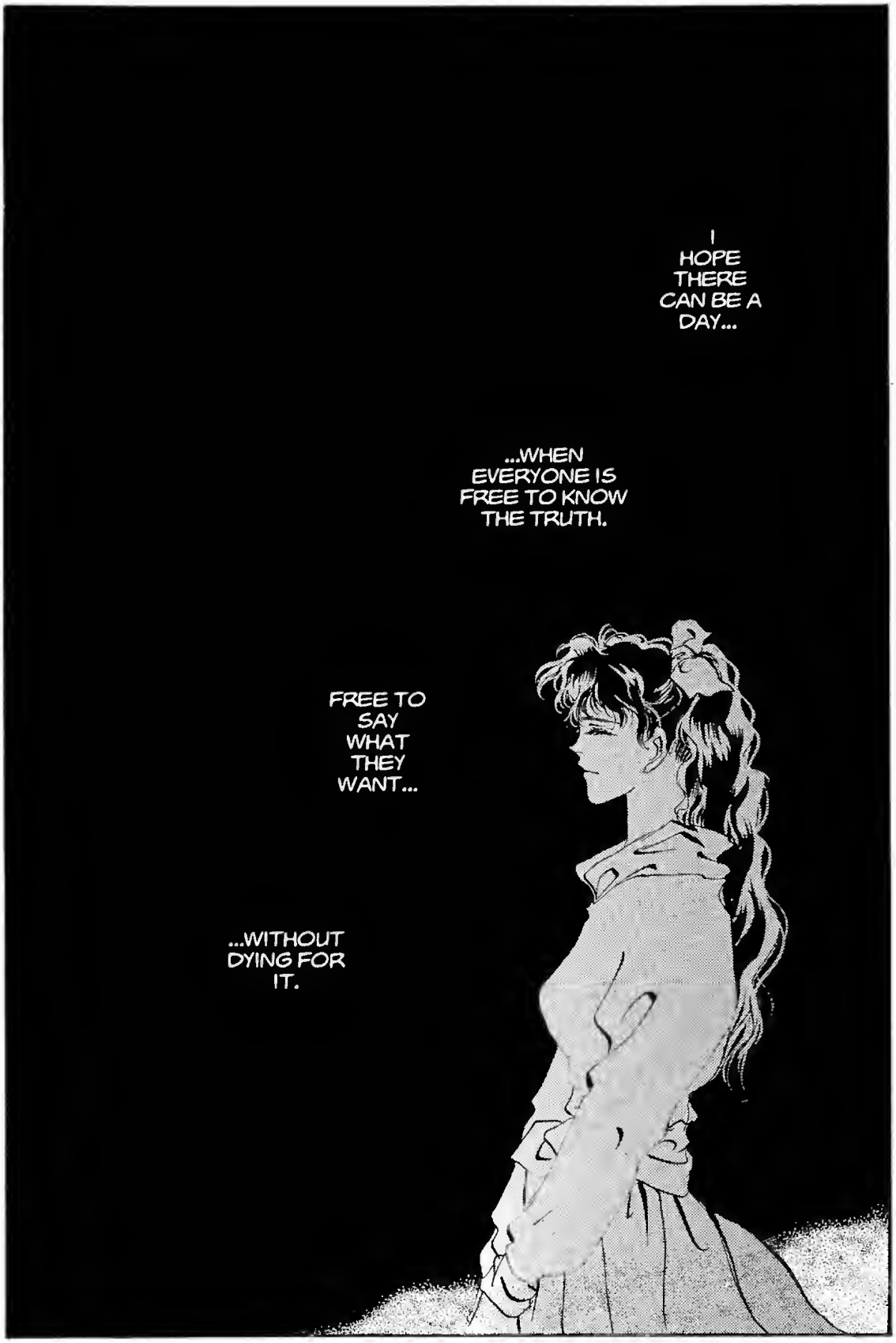
RENKO... WAS A LITTLE LIKE MY MOTHER.

...THOSE TWO SHOULD HAVE DIED.
THERE WAS NO REA-SON...

HOW LONG MUST IT BE LIKE THIS?


TATARA.
THE PALACE.
RED FLAGS ARE FLYING.

THE TIME HAS COME TO CROSS SWORDS WITH THE RED KING.


I HOPE THERE CAN BE A DAY...
...WHEN EVERYONE IS FREE TO KNOW THE TRUTH.
FREE TO SAY WHAT THEY WANT...
...WITHOUT DYING FOR IT.

CRIMSON TALE 5: FLOW OF FIRE

KTA KTA KTA
COMING IN WAVES...
I HEARD THE SOUND OF HOOVES...
DM DM DM DM DM
KTA KTA
THE RED ARMY HAS COME!
IT'S THE RED KING!
TATARA!

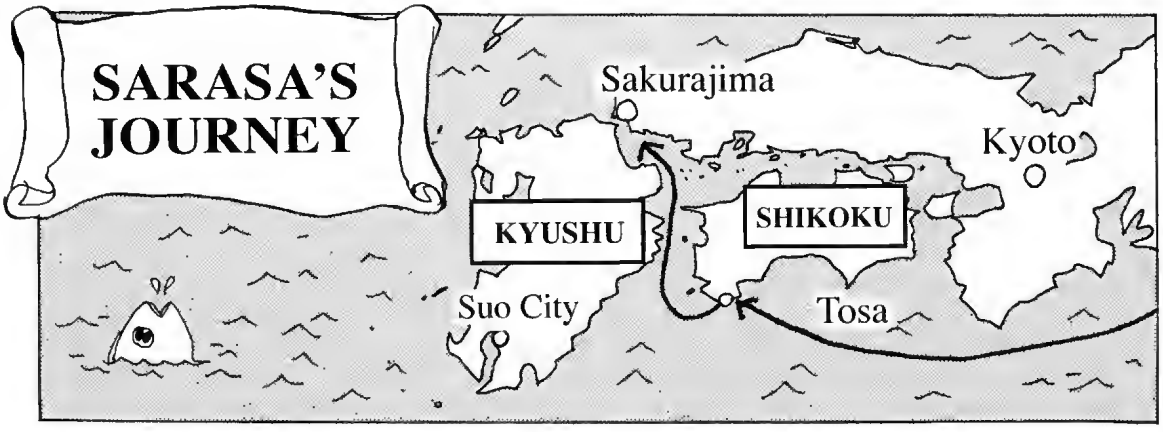
TINY TAM-TAM TIME (2)

I finally moved into my office! I was being interviewed, so I moved all my work stuff. (One floor below in the same building.)
I'm so tired!

I'm working in the new office right now. It was so clean... but it's already a mess...
(Why can't I learn to organize?)

TAMU.

Things I love: (2) Nissin Seafood Instant Noodles
I love their chili tomato flavor. Did it get discontinued?



WHICH ONE IS TATARA, THE BOY OF DESTINY!?
KILL HIM!
TATARA!
KILL HIM!
TATARA!

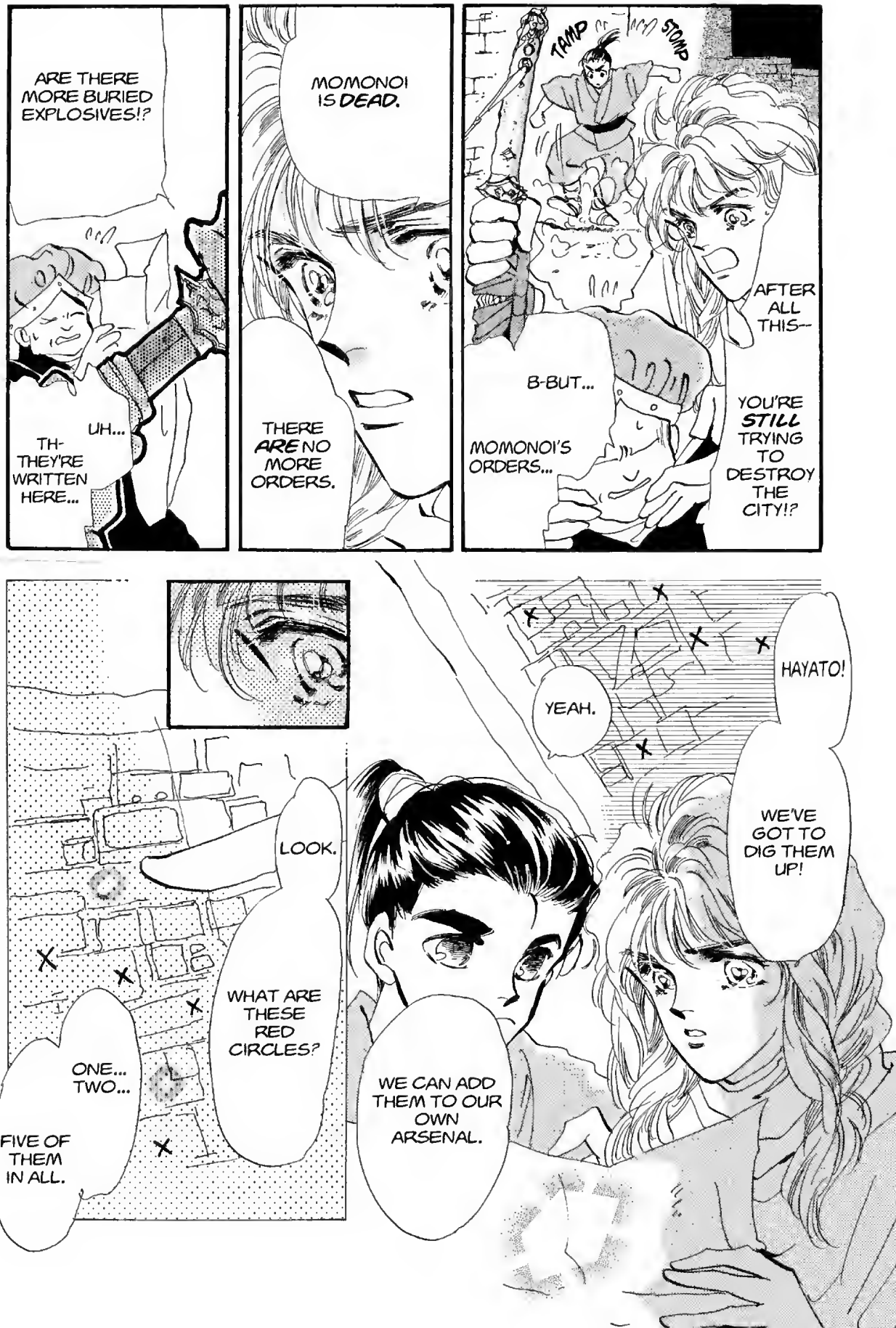
IT WAS A DARK NIGHT.
A CRESCENT OF A MOON HUNG IN THE SKY.
I COULDN'T HAVE SEEN ANY COLOR.
BUT IN MY MIND, I SAW...
...THE COLOR OF BLOOD.
THE COLOR OF FLAMES.
THE RED ARMY CLAD IN ARMOR.
IN MY MEMORIES OF THAT NIGHT...
THE WORLD IS RED.

...AND THE DEATHS OF EVERYONE IN BYAKKO VILLAGE...
MY BROTHER... MY FATHER...
THE MAN RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR MURDERS...
THAT MAN HAS COME BACK TO SUO.
CHF
HOW CAN I?
HOW CAN I SLEEP WITH THE RED KING RIGHT THERE IN THAT PALACE?
YOU SHOULD GET SOME SLEEP, TATARA.

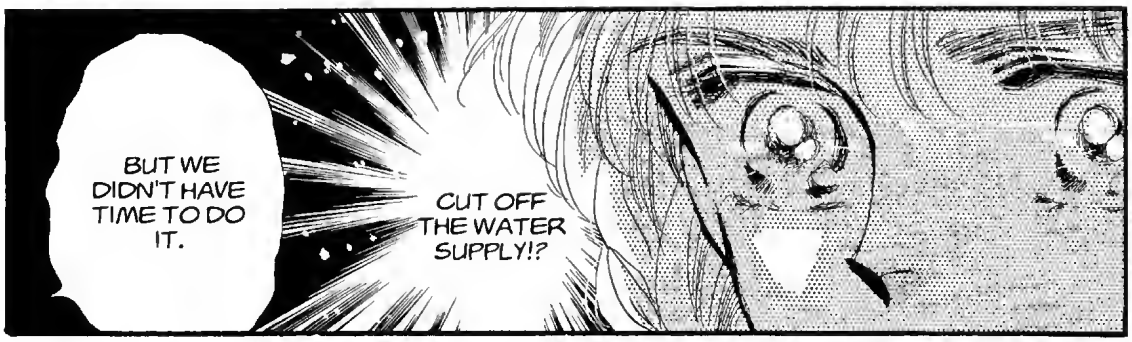
IN A RECURRING DREAM...
I'M ON HORSEBACK AND I SWING MY SWORD DOWN ON THE RED KING.
WE BOTH LEAD SMALL FACTIONS.
BUT NOW...
BOTH SHUNNED BY KING UKON.
HE SEEMED SO HUGE BEFORE.
I COULD DO NOTHING.
WE CAN'T HELP THAT OUR HOUSE IS GONE...
DON'T CRY.
SHUSH. SHUSH.
WAAA
WAAA
AWAA
THERE'S NO PLACE WORTH GOING.
...I GUESS NOT.
I'M GETTIN' OUT OF TOWN.
POP
HSS
WHAT'LL WE DO NOW?
HE TURNS AROUND...
AND THAT'S WHERE I ALWAYS WAKE UP.

AWAA AAA
ONE TIME HE...
HOW IS HE BETTER?
HE OFFENDED THE RED KING AND WAS KILLED.
A BIT.
HE'S BETTER THAN MOMONOI.
AWAA
MY PA...
BUSINESS WILL BE EASIER, AT LEAST!
ARE YOU...
HAPPY THAT THE RED KING IS BACK?
KILLERS, BOTH OF THEM.
HE AND MOMONOI ARE THE SAME.
WHERE WE NEVER FEAR...
A NATION WHERE WE NEVER FEAR...
NEVER FEAR THE EXECUTIONER...
WHERE WE NEVER FEAR THE EXECUTIONER...
WAA
DO YOU THINK SUCH A THING CAN BE?
WHAT WAS IT TATARA SAID? A NATION...
WHERE WE NEVER FEAR THE EXECUTIONER...

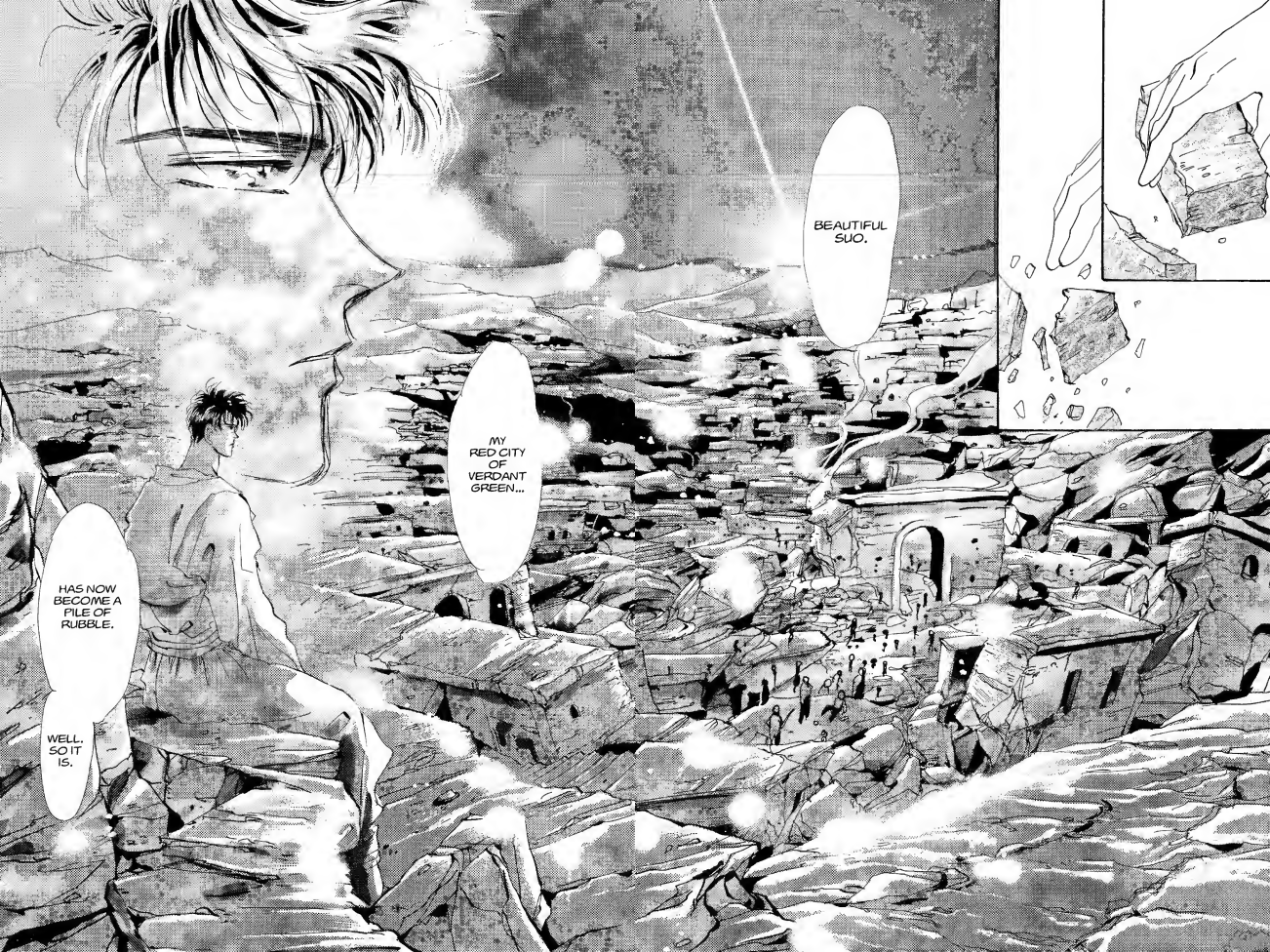
ONE DAY.
IT WILL BE POSSI-BLE.
ONE DAY...
BUT WHEN...?
OH, MY!
GIGGLE
THANK YOU, DEAR.
HE STOPPED CRYING!
FSH
!
HAYATO!
WHAT!?
I SMELL GUN-POWDER!
SSSS
PCH
THERE!
STOP!


ARE THERE MORE BURIED EXPLOSIVES!?
UH...
TH-THEY'RE WRITTEN HERE...
MOMONOI IS DEAD.
THERE ARE NO MORE ORDERS.
TAMP
STOMP
AFTER ALL THIS--
B-BUT...
MOMONOI'S ORDERS...
YOU'RE STILL TRYING TO DESTROY THE CITY!?
LOOK.
WHAT ARE THESE RED CIRCLES?
ONE... TWO...
FIVE OF THEM IN ALL.
WE CAN ADD THEM TO OUR OWN ARSENAL.
YEAH.
HAYATO!
WE'VE GOT TO DIG THEM UP!

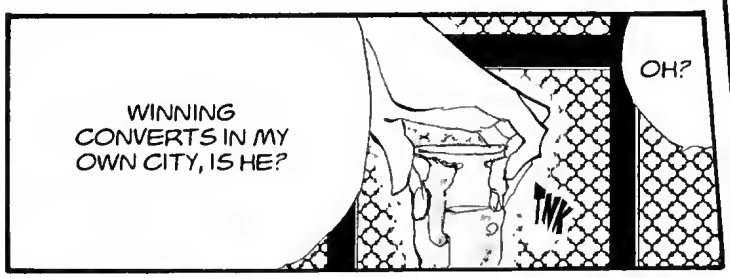
THOSE WERE...
IN CASE THE RED KING RECAPTURED THE PALACE.
BY SETTING OFF THOSE FIVE EXPLOSIVES...
WE COULD CUT OFF ITS WATER SUPPLY.
IT WAS TO BE OUR LAST RESORT.

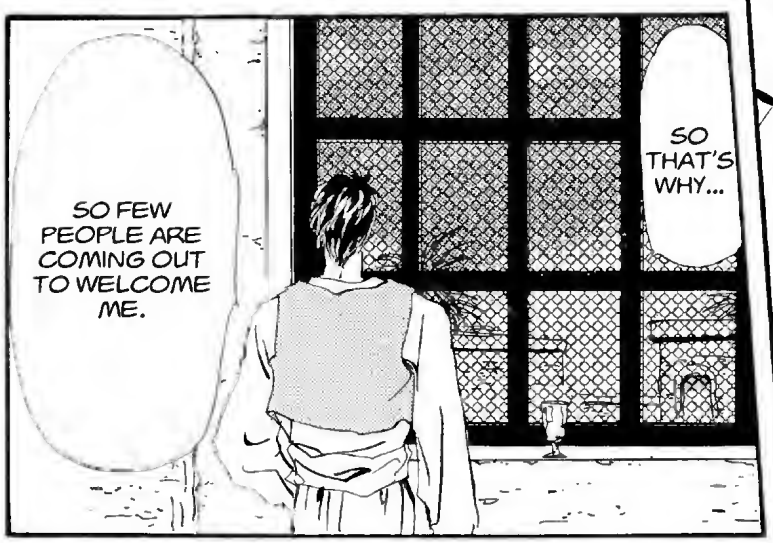

BUT WE DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO DO IT.
CUT OFF THE WATER SUPPLY!?

THE SEWERS UNDER THE PALACE ARE ALL PROBABLY BURIED BY NOW, SO...
HUH.
THERE'S NO WAY TO SET THIS OFF.
THIS ONE'S LABELED "PALACE COURT-YARD WELL."
IN MY VILLAGE, OUR WELL WAS BURIED, TOO.
THAT NIGHT...
SHALL WE DO IT?
CUT OFF THEIR WATER SUPPLY?

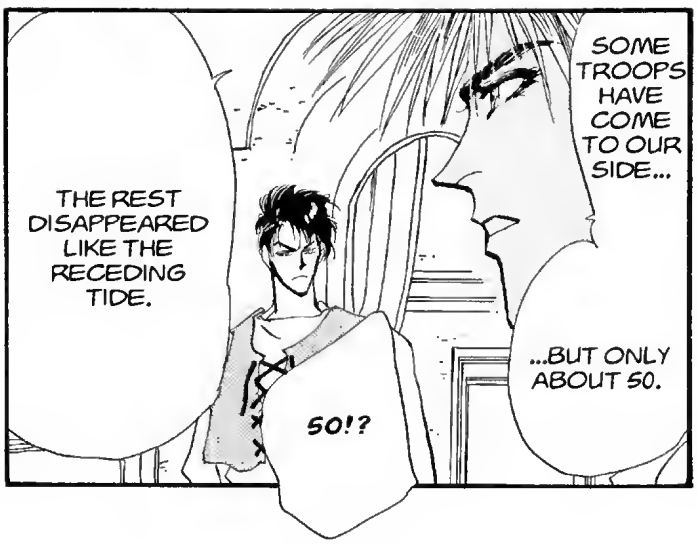

BEAUTIFUL SUO.
MY RED CITY OF VERDANT GREEN...
HAS NOW BECOME A PILE OF RUBBLE.
WELL, SO IT IS.

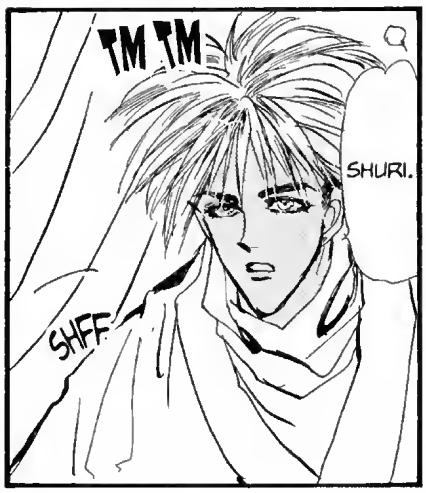
...TO CREATE SUCH A NATION.
TATARA PROM-ISED...


WINNING CONVERTS IN MY OWN CITY, IS HE?
OH?
TINK


SO FEW PEOPLE ARE COMING OUT TO WELCOME ME.
SO THAT'S WHY...

SAKAKI.
WHAT'S THIS PHRASE I HEAR EVERY-WHERE?
EVERY-ONE'S RECITING IT LIKE A PRAYER.
"NOT FEARING THE EXECUTIONER."

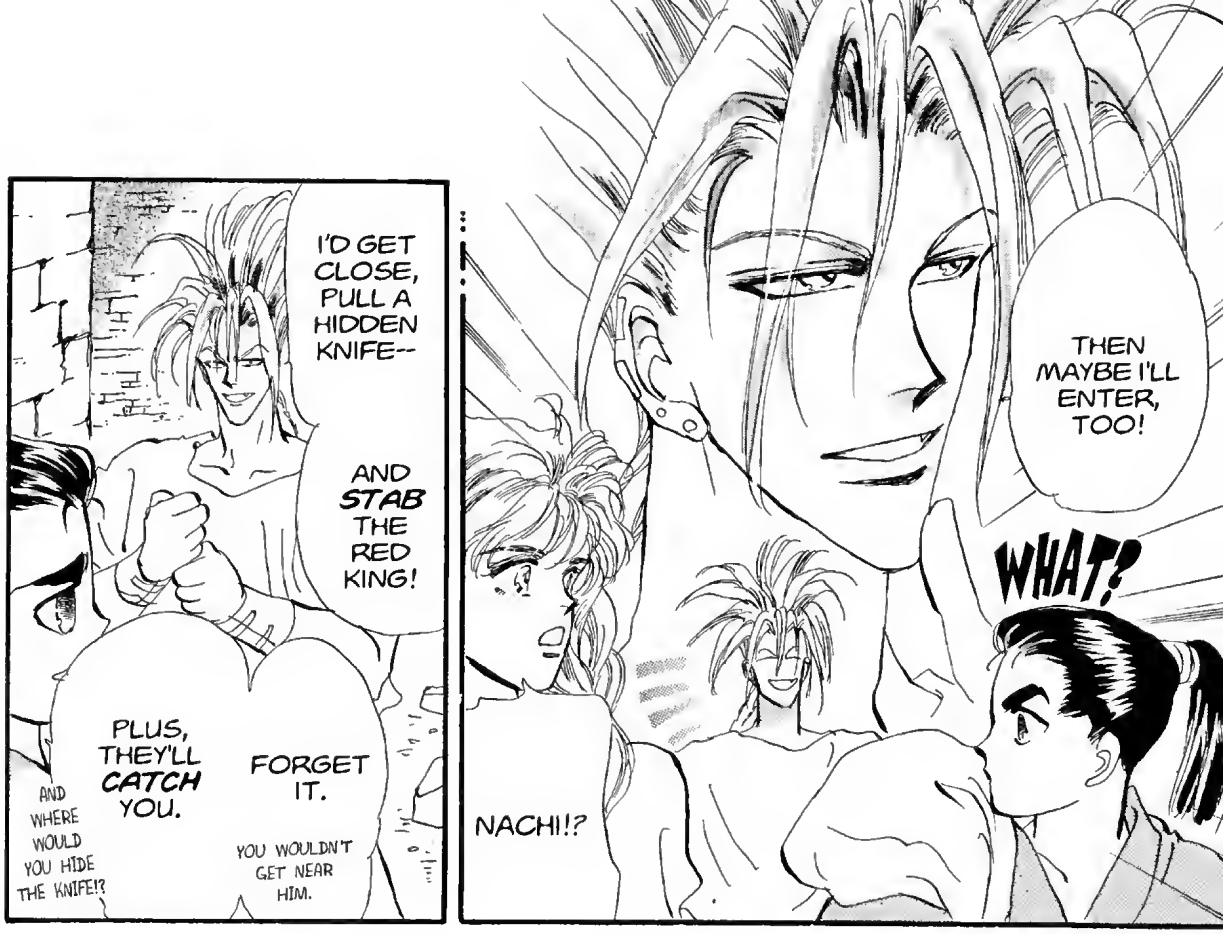

THE REST DISAPPEARED LIKE THE RECEDING TIDE.
SOME TROOPS HAVE COME TO OUR SIDE...
...BUT ONLY ABOUT 50.
50!?

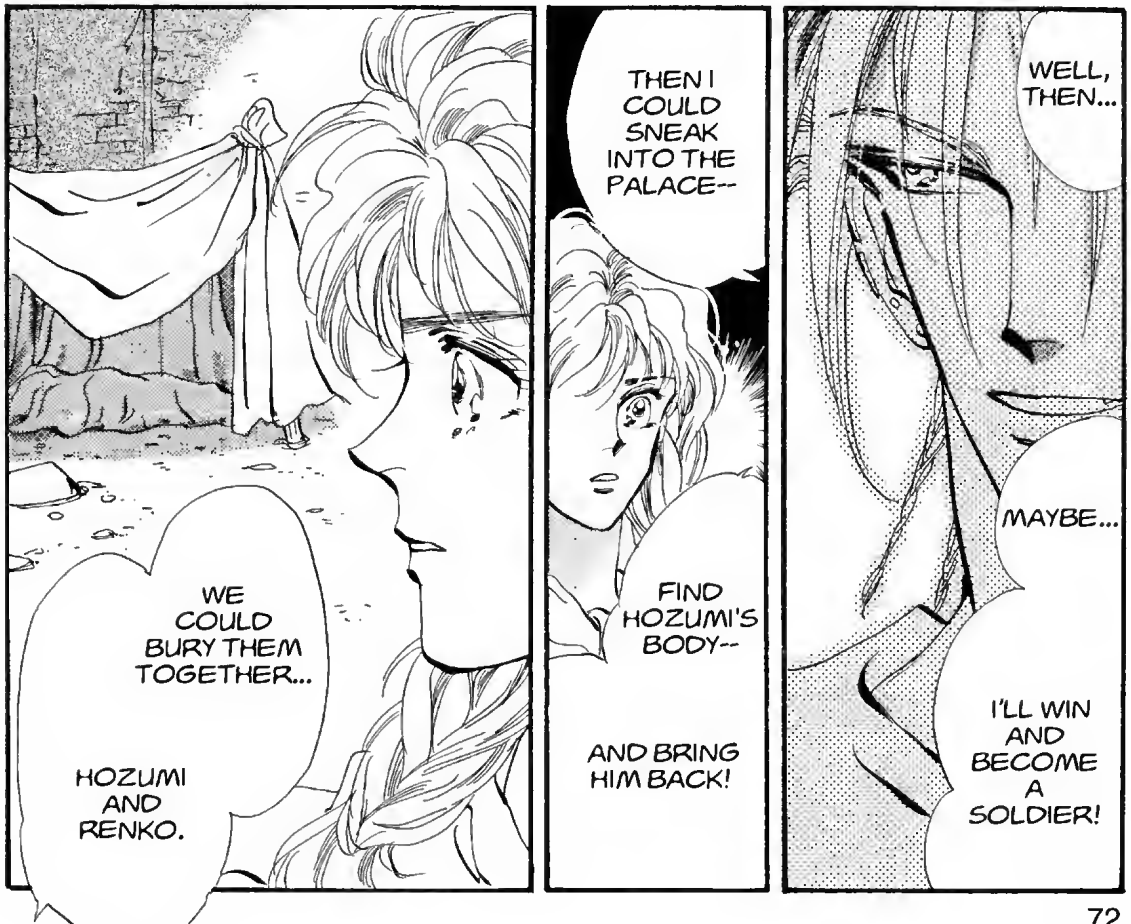

TM TM
SHURI.
SHFF

I ALWAYS THOUGHT...
...IT WAS A GOOD THING...
...FOR A RULER TO INSPIRE FEAR.
BUT NOW...
THIS WASN'T WHAT I EXPECTED.
I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU WERE POPULAR.
THEY'RE AFRAID OF THE RED KING.
AFRAID OF HIM!?
THEY TOOK PART IN THE INSURRECTION.
THEY HELPED DRIVE HIM OUT.
I ENVY YOUR COURAGE.
NOW THEY'RE AFRAID OF RETRIBUTION.

NOW I THINK...
MOMONOI'S MEN WILL FIND REINFORCE-MENTS IN KYOTO.
THEY'LL RETURN FOR ANOTHER ATTACK.
THE SOLDIERS BEING ASSEMBLED IN DAZAIFU...
WILL PROBABLY COME HERE, TOO.
AND THERE'S TATARA TO CON-SIDER.
A THREE-SIDED WAR--
PLUS YUNA AND THE OTHERS IN SHIKOKU...
AND WE HAVE ONLY 50 MEN!
SIRE...
WHAT SHALL WE DO!?
WELL...
MAYBE WE SHOULD HOLD A SUMO TOURNA-MENT.
WHAT!?
I'LL MAKE AN ANNOUNCE-MENT.
TK TK
OH!
A FINE IDEA!
WHAT!?

A SUMO TOURNAMENT!
THE ANNUAL TOURNAMENT IS BACK!
BUT ...
FIRST THERE'S SOMEONE I HAVE TO SEE.
IF HE'S STILL ALIVE, THAT IS.
BUT IT'S FUN!
IT'LL BRING BACK MEMORIES!
WHAT ARE THEY THINKING? PEOPLE HAVE BEEN BURNED OUT OF THEIR HOMES...
MAYBE IT'S A GOOD WAY...
TO UNITE PEOPLE AFTER SO MUCH HELL.
WOO-HOO
THIS IS RIDICU-LOUS...
BUT IT LIFTS SPIRITS.
THERE'LL BE PRIZES, TOO!
YADDA
YADDA
AND THE BEST CONTEST-ANTS--
YAY
WILL BE HIRED AS SOLDIERS!
YEAH! I'M ENTERING!


I'D GET CLOSE, PULL A HIDDEN KNIFE--
AND STAB THE RED KING!
PLUS, THEY'LL CATCH YOU.
FORGET IT.
AND WHERE WOULD YOU HIDE THE KNIFE!?
YOU WOULDN'T GET NEAR HIM.
NACHI!?
THEN MAYBE I'LL ENTER, TOO!
WHAT?

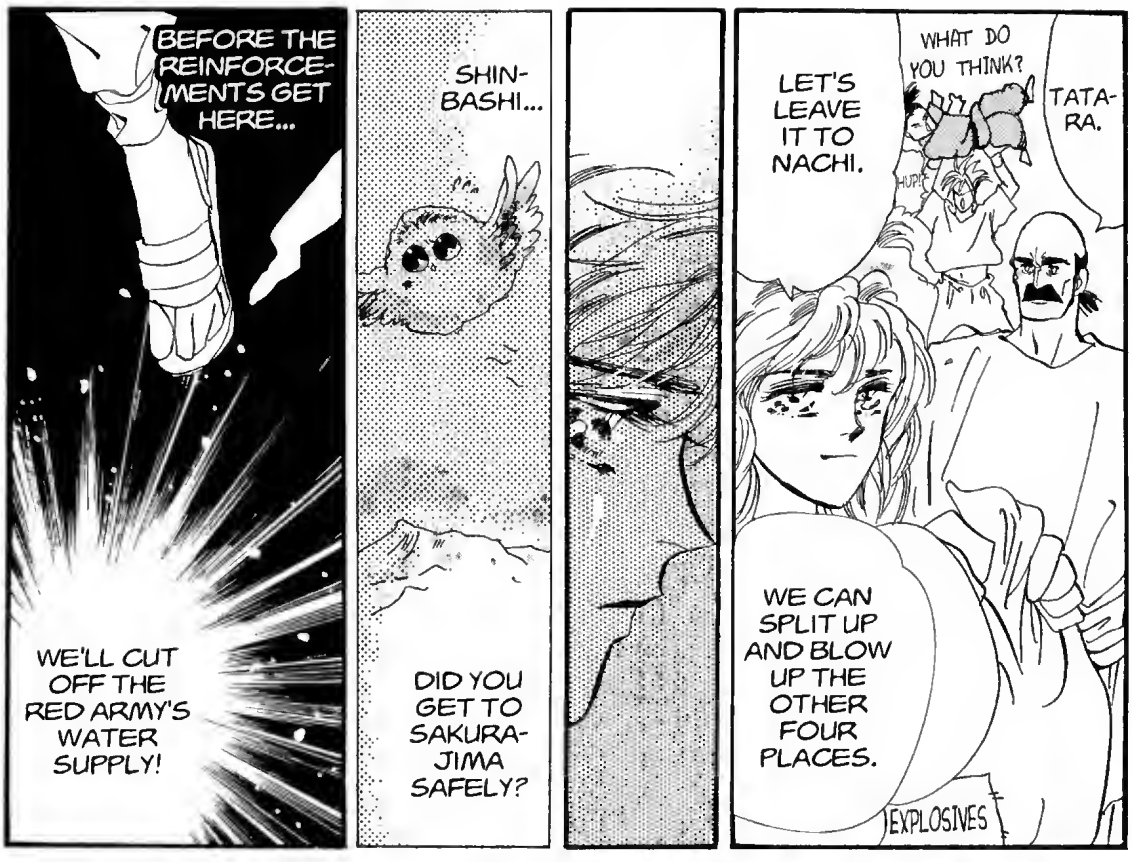

WE COULD BURY THEM TOGETHER...
HOZUMI AND RENKO.
THEN I COULD SNEAK INTO THE PALACE--
FIND HOZUMI'S BODY--
AND BRING HIM BACK!
WELL, THEN...
MAYBE...
I'LL WIN AND BECOME A SOLDIER!

RENKO...

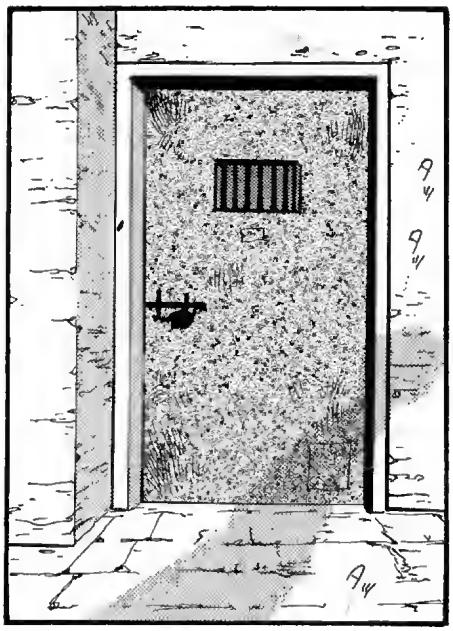
AND THEN...
I COULD SET OFF THE EXPLOSIVES IN THE PALACE!
SO LONG, RED KING!

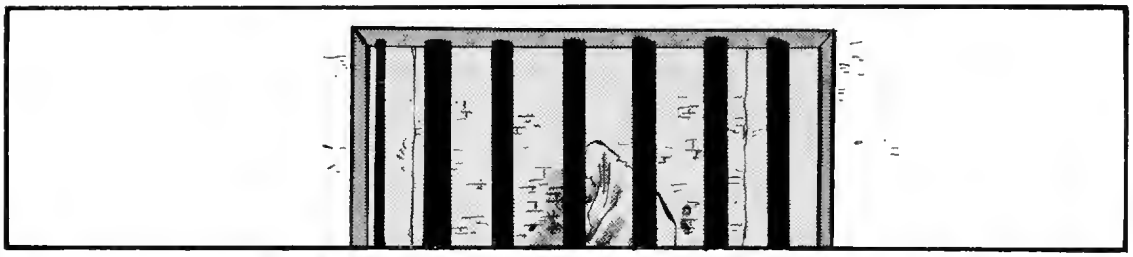
WE LIVE FOR SUMO WHERE I COME FROM!
GA, HA, HA! I'LL HAMMER 'EM!
YOU THINK I CAN'T!?
I HAVEN'T LOST SINCE I WAS FOUR!
EXCEPT TO HIJIRI.

WELL...
I GUESS SO...
IF YOU CAN ACTUALLY WIN!

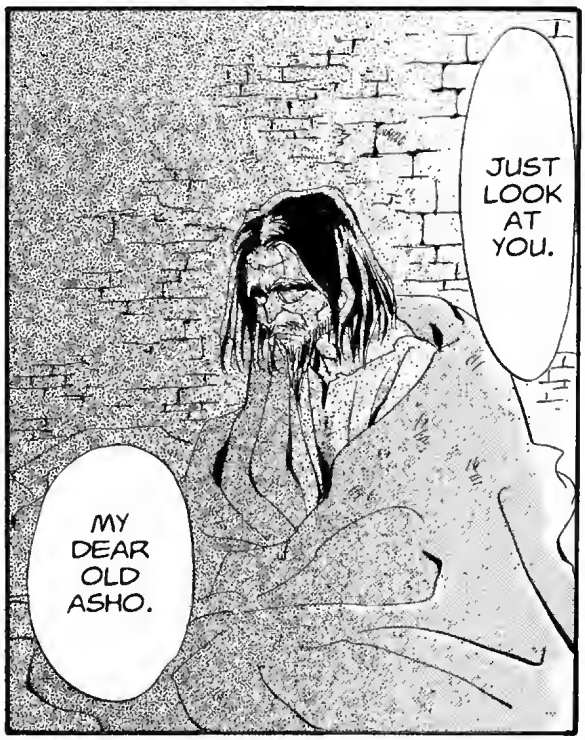

BEFORE THE REINFORCEMENTS GET HERE...
WE'LL CUT OFF THE RED ARMY'S WATER SUPPLY!
SHIN-BASHI...
DID YOU GET TO SAKURA-JIMA SAFELY?
LET'S LEAVE IT TO NACHI.
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
TATA-RA.
HUPI
WE CAN SPLIT UP AND BLOW UP THE OTHER FOUR PLACES.
EXPLOSIVES

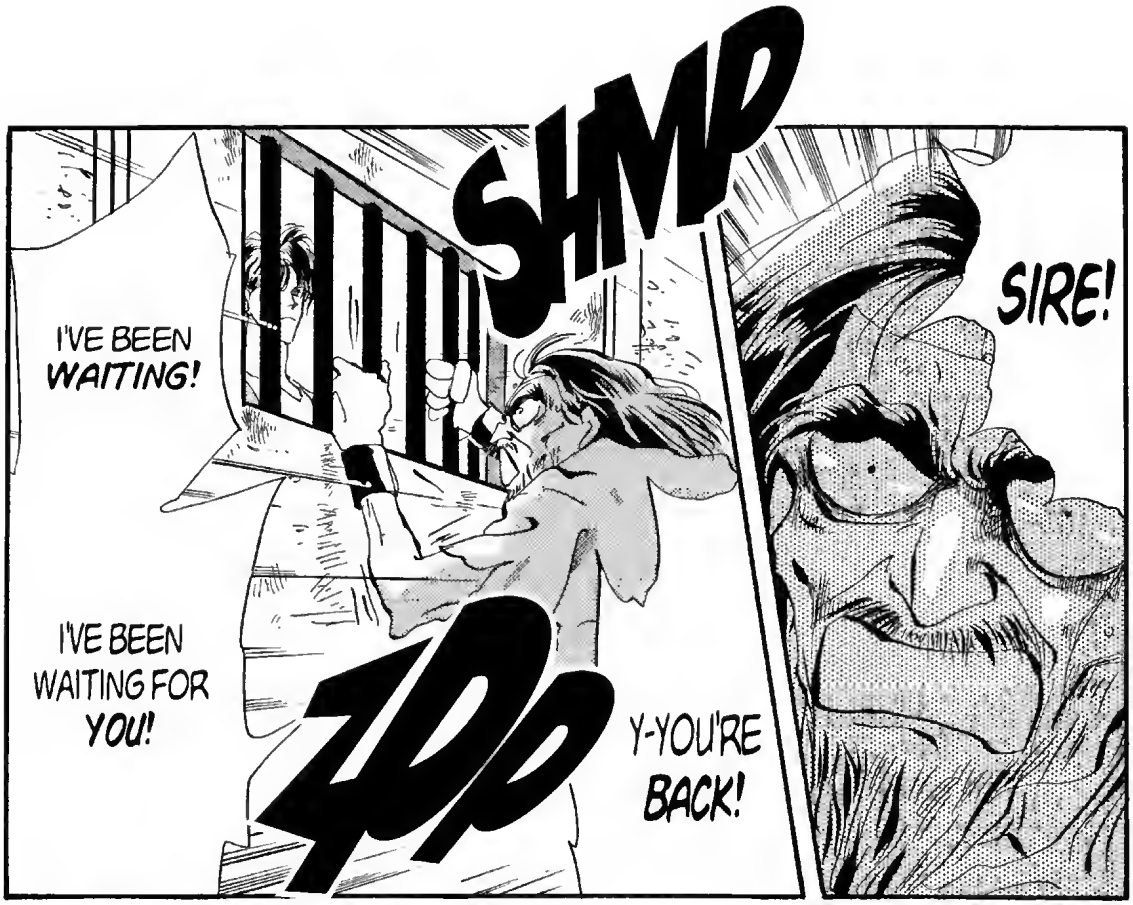
TK TK TK TK
SKSH
KRI!
YES, SIR.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO COME WITH ME.

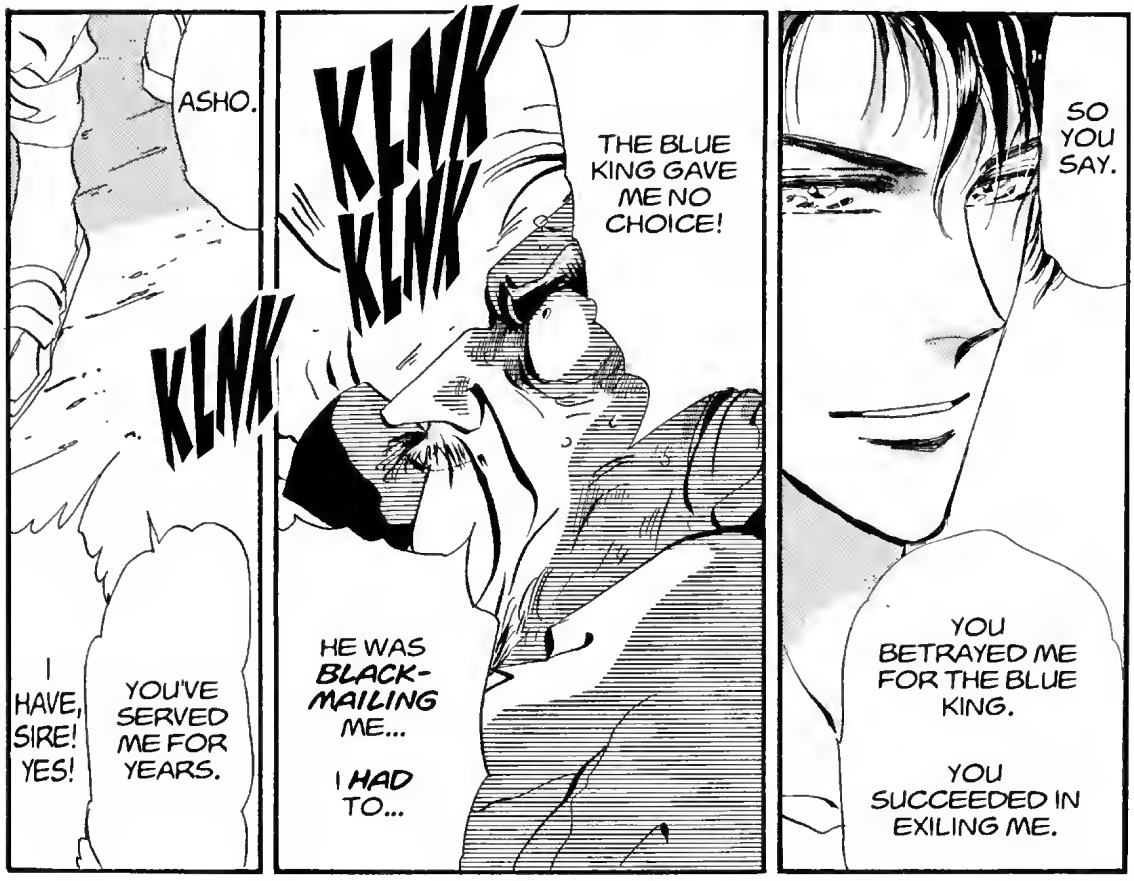




WELL?
HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN WHAT I LOOK LIKE?


JUST LOOK AT YOU.
MY DEAR OLD ASHO.


SHMP
I'VE BEEN WAITING!
SIRE!
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU!
POP
Y-YOU'RE BACK!


ASHO.
KLNK
KLNK
KLNK
THE BLUE KING GAVE ME NO CHOICE!
SO YOU SAY.
I HAVE, SIRE! YES!
YOU'VE SERVED ME FOR YEARS.
HE WAS BLACK-MAILING ME...
I HAD TO...
YOU BETRAYED ME FOR THE BLUE KING.
YOU SUCCEEDED IN EXILING ME.

THAT SUCH NON-SENSE...-
WOULD FOOL ME!?
THEN DO YOU REALLY IMAGINE...
THAT YOU'D GIVE ME A CHANCE!
BUT I DO THINK...
N-NO! I DON'T!
OH?
WHAT'S THIS IDEA?
AND AN IDEA CAME TO ME!
I CAN CAPTURE HIM! I PROMISE!
I WAS THINKING..
ABOUT TATARA...

TELL ME!
WHAT DIFFER-ENCE DOES IT MAKE!?
THEN THIS ONE TOOK HIS PLACE ...
SO WHAT!?
THAT NIGHT...
WE KILLED HIM.
THE TRUE TATARA DIED.
WHEN WE ATTACKED THE BYAKKO VILLAGE...
SO YOU SAY. BUT ONCE YOU'RE OUT OF SIGHT...
YOU'LL ONLY COME AFTER MY HEAD AGAIN.
KLNK
KLNK
KLNK
YOU'LL SEE!
JUST GIVE ME A CHANCE!
I'LL CAPTURE TATARA FOR YOU!
AH.
BUT IT DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

VERTICAL TAM-TAM TIME ②

HIJIRI'S PROFILE:

Born December 19, Sagittarius. Blood type A. Same age as Nachi.

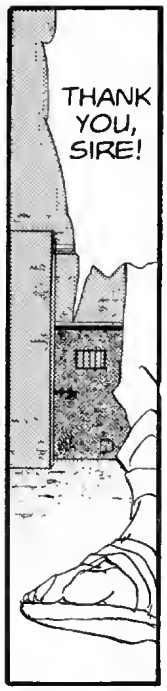
The marks on his face aren't scars... just marks.

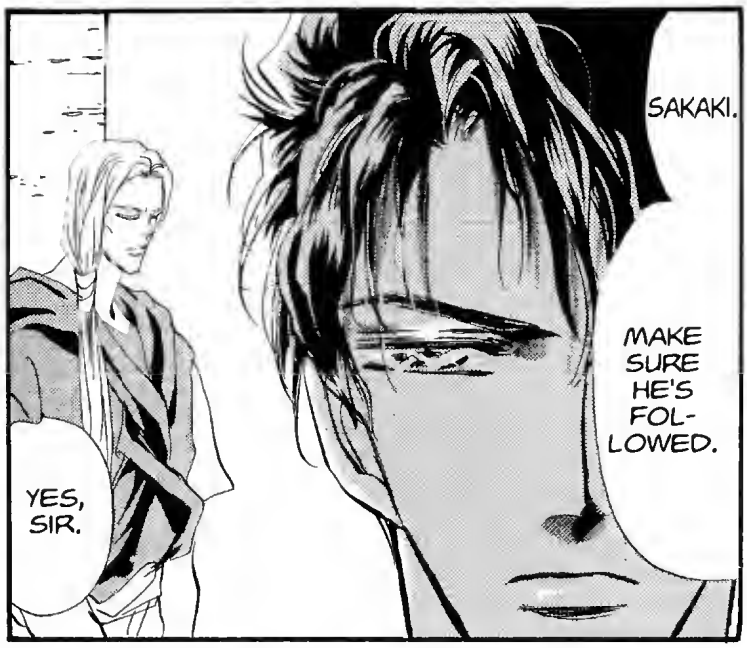
Leader of the Tengu Faction.

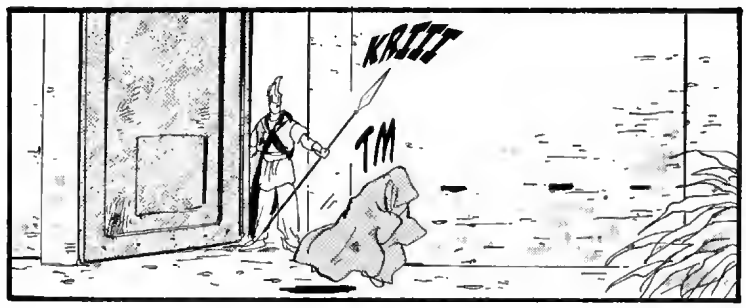
He acts cold, but it was recently revealed that his heart's very warm.

I like him a lot.

TAMU.



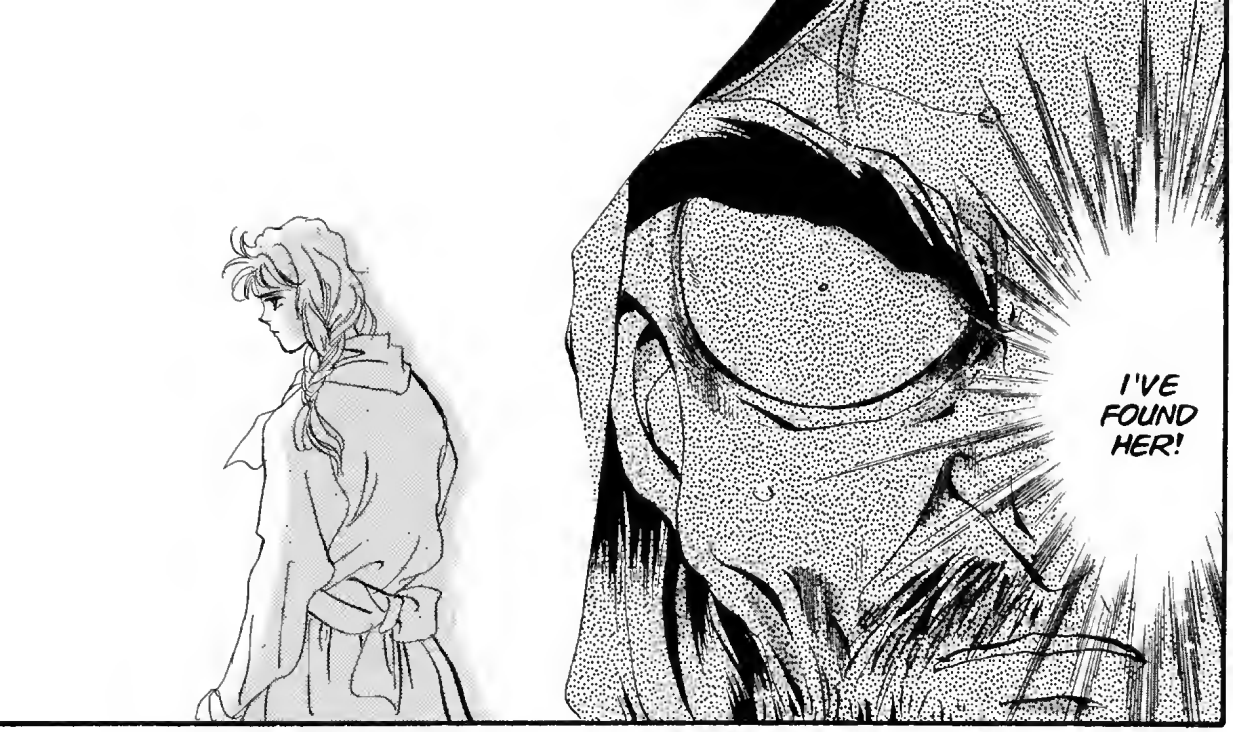


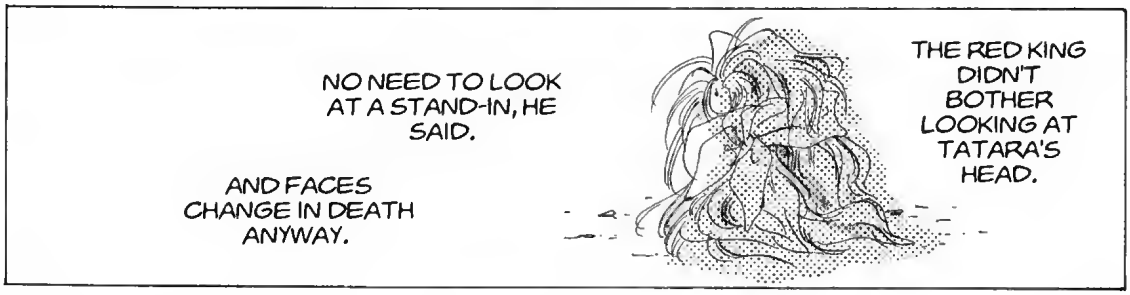


BUT I'LL BET IT WAS THE OTHER WAY AROUND!
THAT'S WHY WE HAVEN'T CAUGHT TATARA.
THEY SAID TATARA HAD A TWIN SISTER.
WE THOUGHT SHE WAS THE ONE WHO WAS KILLED...
SAKAKI'S DONE WELL FOR HIMSELF.
HMPH.
BRIGHT LIGHT!
BUT I'LL TAKE MY PLACE BACK YET.
I KNOW I'M RIGHT!
WE WON'T FIND HIM IF WE LOOK FOR A MAN.
THIS IS THE MOMENT OF TRUTH!
I MUST SUCCEED TO SURVIVE.
TATARA IS A WOMAN!

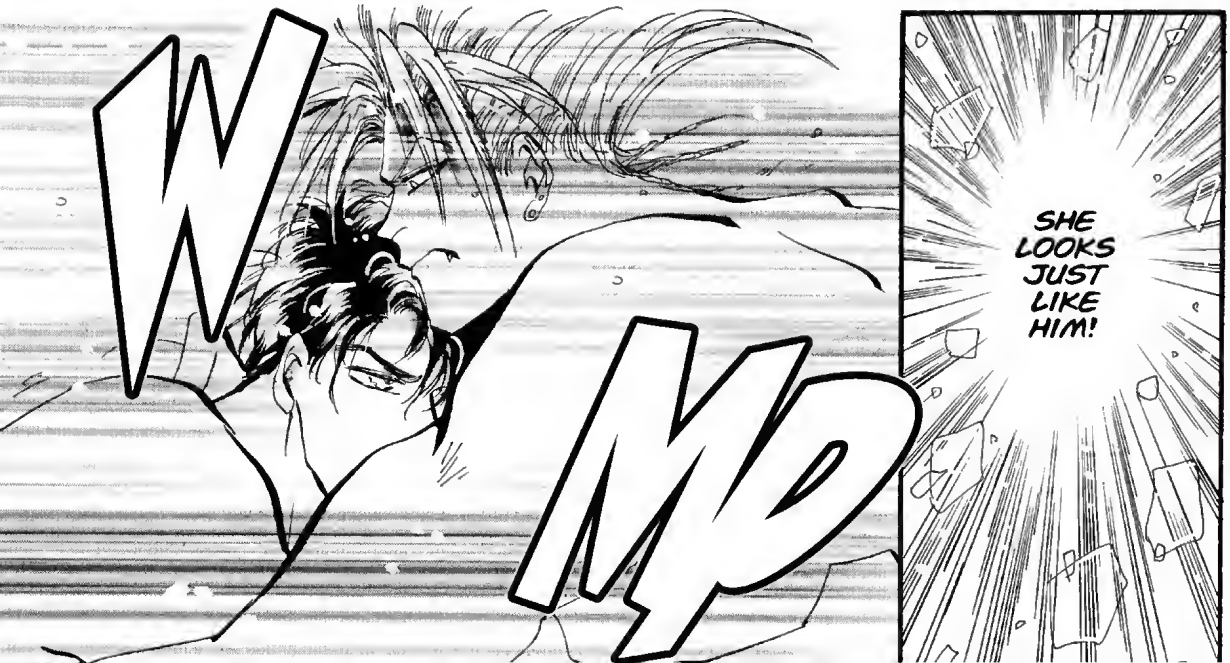
WOO-HOO
OH YEAH!
ALL RIGHT.
I'LL TAKE YOU ON NEXT.
WHAT WEIRD HAIR...
YOU'RE GOOD!
I WISH I'D ENTERED!
HE'S BEATEN FIVE!
GO!
GO!
YEAH!

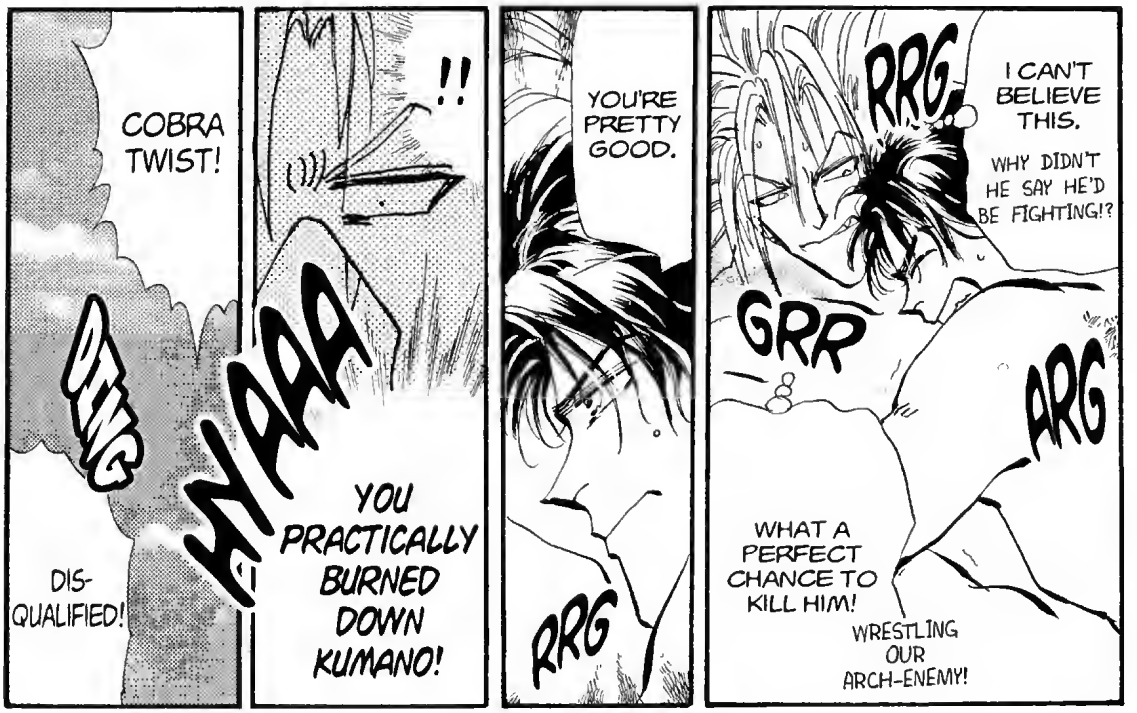
THE RED KING'S UP!
WHOA!
HIS FIRST TIME!
THE RED KING!?
THAT'S WHAT I LOVE ABOUT THAT MAN!
WE'LL WAIT FOR NACHI TO PLANT ONE IN THE PALACE WELL...
AND SET THEM OFF ALL AT ONCE.
PHEW!
RAAA YAY!
SF
SFF
IS EVERYONE ELSE DONE?
THAT SHOULD DO IT.

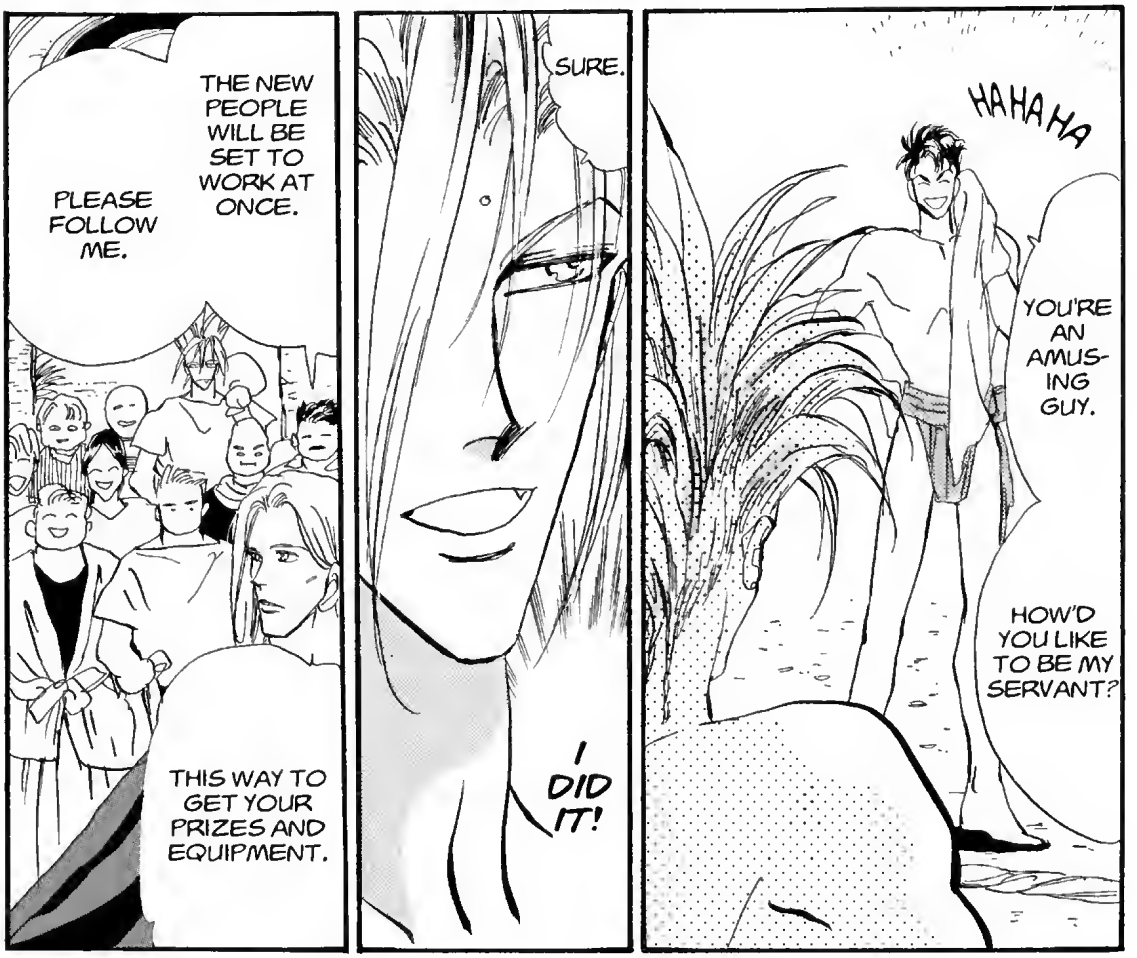

I'VE FOUND HER!


NO NEED TO LOOK AT A STAND-IN, HE SAID.
AND FACES CHANGE IN DEATH ANYWAY.
THE RED KING DIDN'T BOTHER LOOKING AT TATARA'S HEAD.

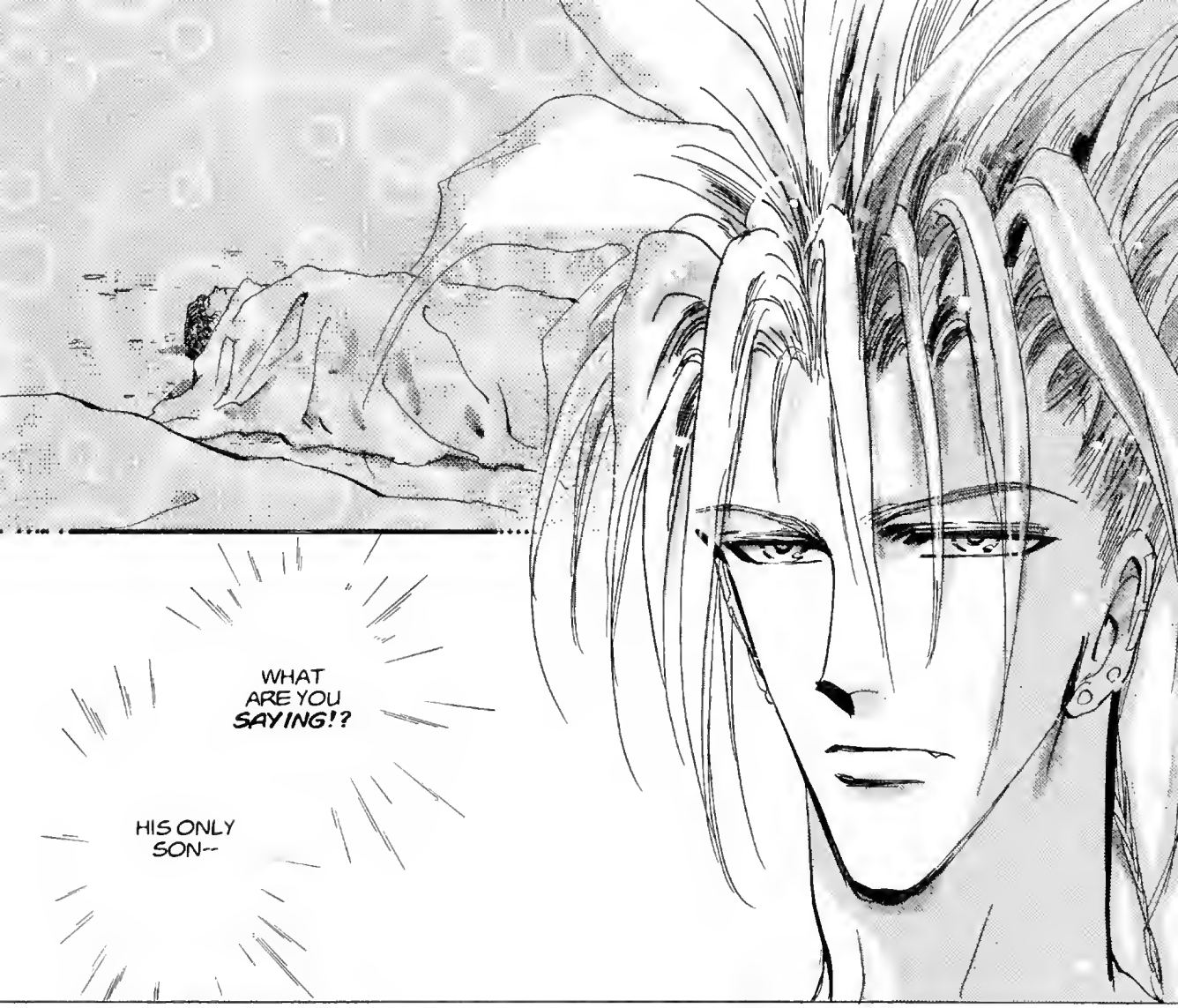
...SAW TATARA UP CLOSE WHILE HE WAS STILL ALIVE.
...AND GENERAL KAZAN...
BUT I...

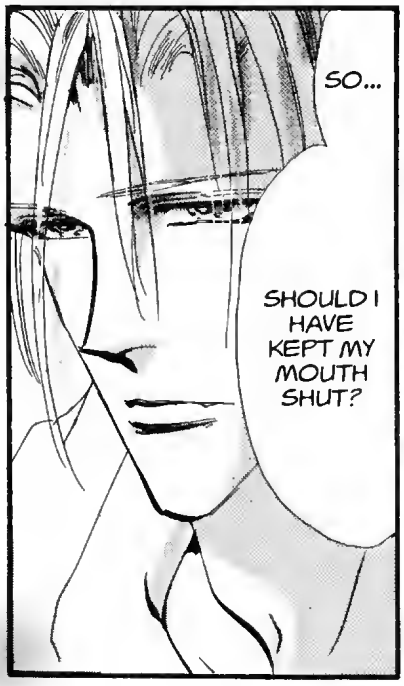

WHO
SHE LOOKS JUST LIKE HIM!

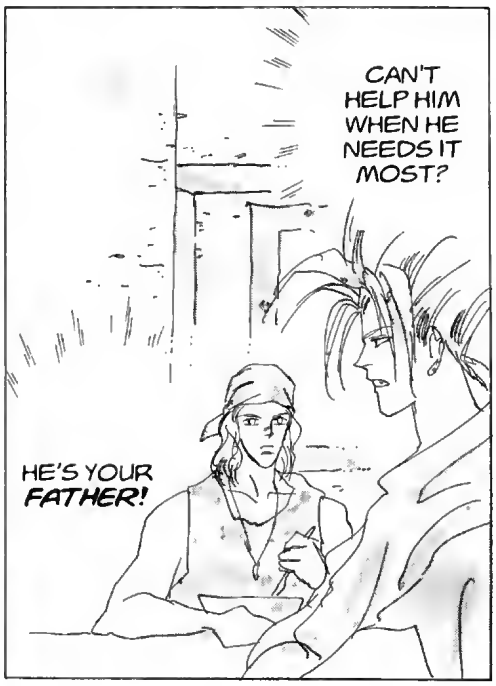

COBRA TWIST!
!!
DIS-QUALIFIED!
DING
HYAAA
YOU PRACTICALLY BURNED DOWN KUMANO!
YOU'RE PRETTY GOOD.
RRG
RRG
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS.
WHY DIDN'T HE SAY HE'D BE FIGHTING!?
GRR
ARG
WHAT A PERFECT CHANCE TO KILL HIM!
WRESTLING OUR ARCH-ENEMY!


PLEASE FOLLOW ME.
THE NEW PEOPLE WILL BE SET TO WORK AT ONCE.
THIS WAY TO GET YOUR PRIZES AND EQUIPMENT.
SURE.
I DID IT!
HAHAHA
YOU'RE AN AMUSING GUY.
HOW'D YOU LIKE TO BE MY SERVANT?

THIS IS WHERE THEY FOUGHT MOMONOI, ISN'T IT?
YES, IT IS.
WHERE ARE THE CASUALTIES?
THE RED KING DIDN'T WANT TO MAKE A DISPLAY OF THEM.
THEY'RE STILL IN THE MAIN HALL.
WE'LL BURY THEM ALL SOON.
THE PALACE IS VAST. DON'T GET LOST.
TMP TMP


WHAT ARE YOU SAYING!?
HIS ONLY SON--


SO...
SHOULD I HAVE KEPT MY MOUTH SHUT?


CAN'T HELP HIM WHEN HE NEEDS IT MOST?
HE'S YOUR FATHER!

SUCH A FOOL.
YOU SHOULD'VE LEFT THAT OLD MAN--
OOF.
WE'LL BURY YOU WITH RENKO.
YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO WAIT A BIT LONGER.
YOU'RE SUCH A FOOL...
AND ESCAPED WITH THE WOMAN YOU LOVED.
UH-OH.
NOT GOOD.
TM TM
HUH?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
LET'S SEE.
WHERE'S THE WELL?

AND YOU MUST BE TATARA!
HFF
HAA
HAA
HAA
THIS MUST BE IT!

KA
KAK
SHK
I KNOW IT!

KIK
GNG
IF YOU RESIST, I'LL BLOW YOU UP WITH ME!
BUT MY LIFE IS ON THE LINE!
I'M SORRY--
FWEE
FWEE

ALL RIGHT.
I'LL GO TO VERIFY.
WHERE IS HE?
HUH.
I DON'T BELIEVE IT.
DID HE ACTUALLY HAVE A LEAD?
FLAP
SIRE!
IT SEEMS ASHO HAS CAPTURED TATARA!
I WON'T LET GO!
LET ME GO!
WHO ARE YOU!?
THE RED KING!?
ASHO, WE'RE BRINGING THE RED KING NOW!
DON'T LET GO!
KAKU, IT'S TATARA...
IT'S BAD...
WHAT'S WRONG!?

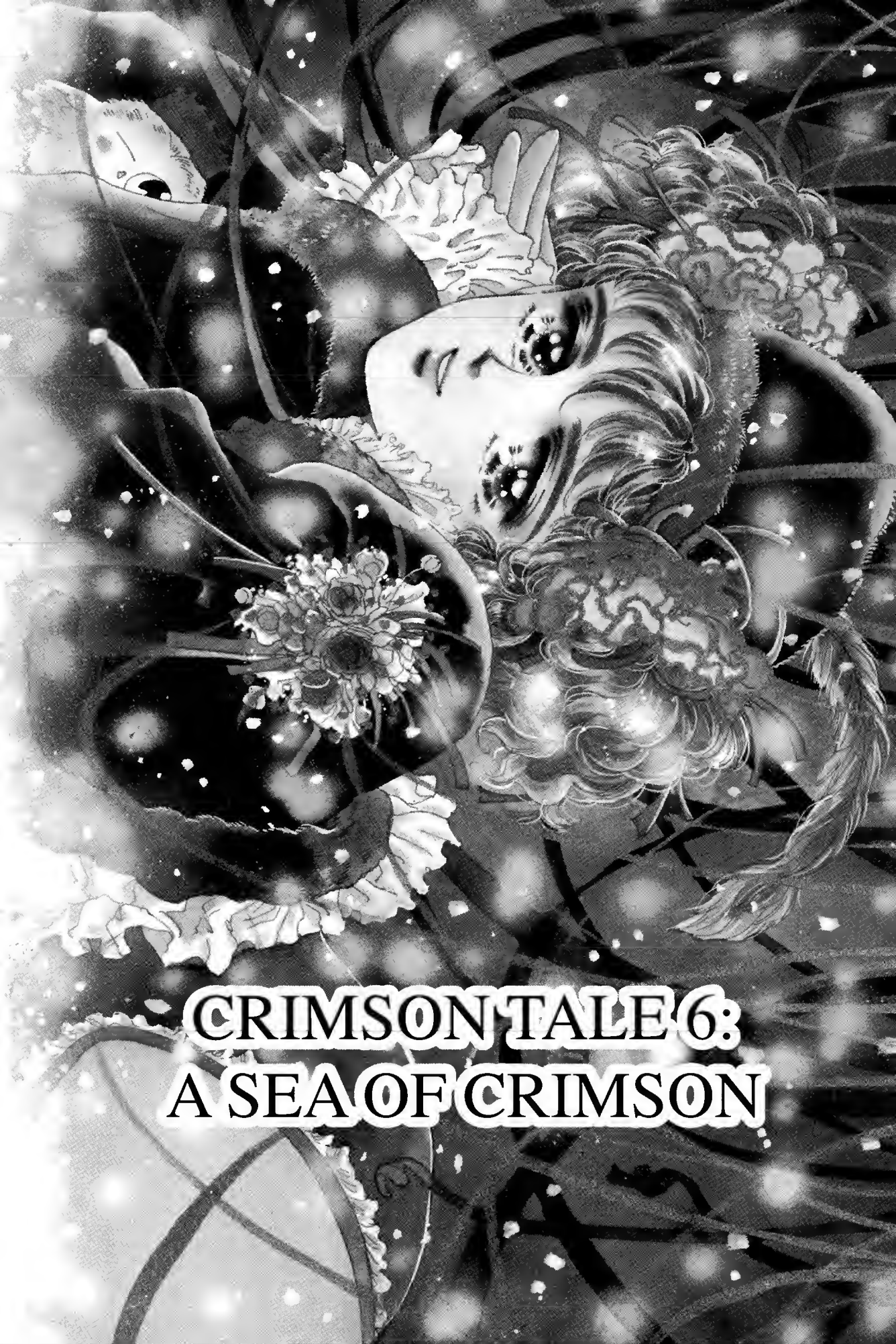
IN A RECURRING DREAM...
I BRING MY SWORD DOWN ON THE RED KING...!
B-BUMP
...AND HE TURNS AROUND.
B-BUMP
B-BUMP
SHK
SHK
SHK
SHK

HE TURNS AROUND...
SHK
B-BM
B-BM
SHK
B-BM
HE TURNS...
...DID I SEE IT?
ON THAT RED NIGHT...
DID I...
...SEE THE RED KING'S FACE?

HOOSH
KU
HYUUU
BOOM

WHAT'S IS IT!?
SIRE! IT'S CANNON FIRE!
FROM THE OCEAN...
FROM A GIANT SHIP!
WE'RE BEING ATTACKED BY TATARA'S ARMY!
WAAH
ISN'T THAT TATARA'S SHIP!?
CHACHA!

"THE RED STAR FLOWS TO THE WEST."
THAT'S WHAT THEY SAY WHEN SCORPIO SINKS BELOW THE WESTERN HORIZON.
IF SCORPIO IS TATARA...
THEN ORION, RISING AT THE SAME TIME IN THE EAST...
MUST BE US... KING UKON'S ARMY!
THE RED KING AND TATARA...
WE'LL WAIT FOR OUR OPPORTUNITY HERE IN DAZAIFU...
WITH LUCK, THEY'LL CRUSH EACH OTHER.
AND FINISH THEM BOTH AT ONCE.



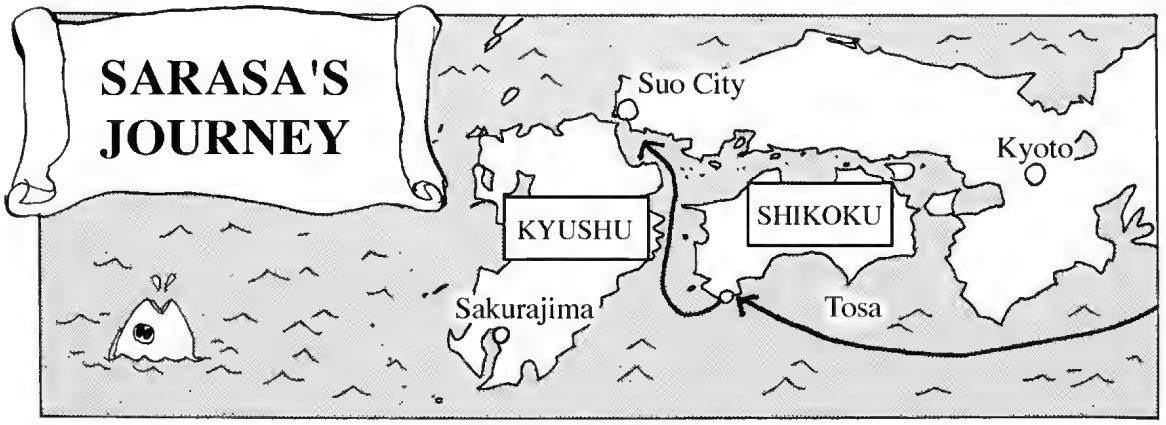
CRIMSON TALE 6: A SEA OF CRIMSON

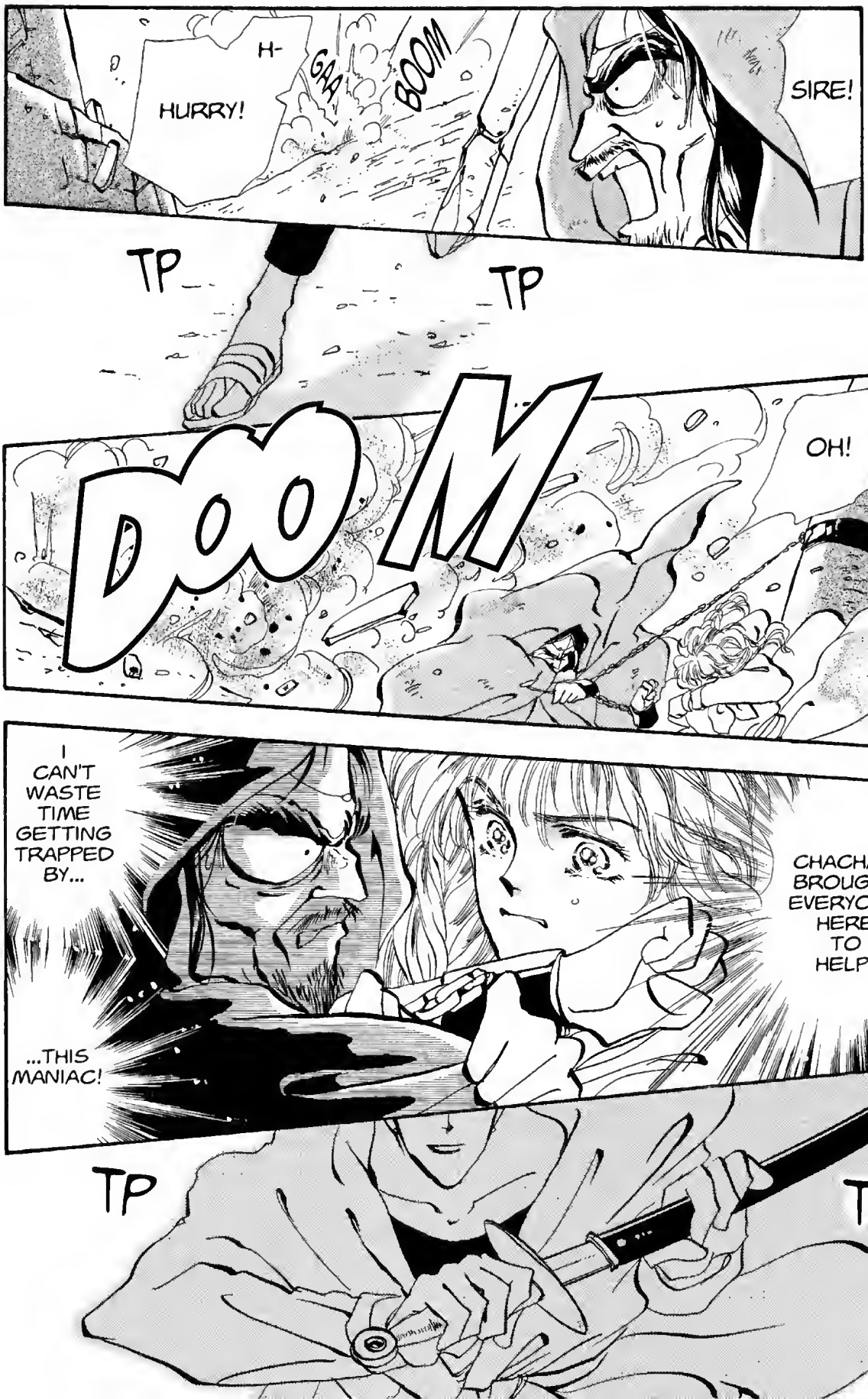
TINY TAM-TAM TIME ③

F.Y.I.

I heard that a CD book is (probably) being produced for "The Reason I'm a ____" (the Ryusaburo series), running in Deluxe Comics in Japan.

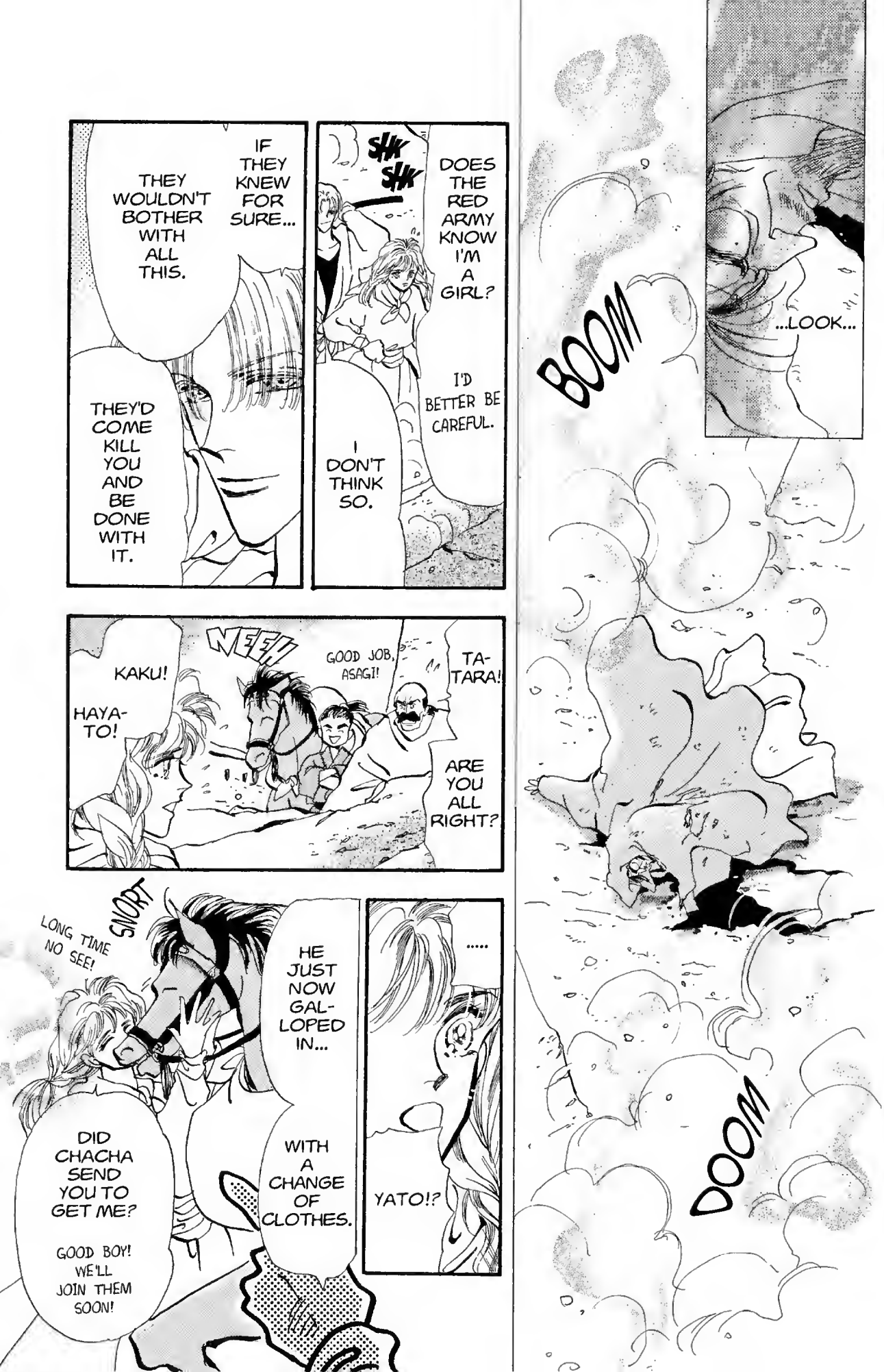
It also (probably) contains a weird drama track and a song. I wholeheartedly recommend it as easy listening-- a different experience from "Basara"! TAMU.




H-
HURRY!
GAA
BOOM
SIRE!
TP
TP
DOOM
OH!
I CAN'T WASTE TIME GETTING TRAPPED BY...
...THIS MANIAC!
CHACHA'S BROUGHT EVERYONE HERE TO HELP!
TP
TP

HS
SH
ZSH
ASA-GI!
YOU JUST CAN'T STOP CAUSING TROUBLE, CAN YOU?
KSSH
WELL? MAKE YOUR ES-CAPE!
HA, HA, HA, HA!
HELP'S COME FOR YOU!
I WAS RIGHT!
I WAS RIGHT AFTER ALL!

THIS GIRL...
HA HA HA HA HA
THIS GIRL...
SIRE!
LOOK!
SHE IS TATARA!
YOUR USEFUL-NESS HAS COME TO AN END.
KA
SI...RE...?
BS
SU


...LOOK...
BOOM
DOOM
DOES THE RED ARMY KNOW I'M A GIRL?
SHK SHK
I'D BETTER BE CAREFUL.
I DON'T THINK SO.
IF THEY KNEW FOR SURE...
THEY WOULDN'T BOTHER WITH ALL THIS.
THEY'D COME KILL YOU AND BE DONE WITH IT.
KAKU!
HAYA-TO!
NEE!!
GOOD JOB, ASAGI!
TA-TARA!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
.....
YATO!?
HE JUST NOW GAL-LOPED IN...
WITH A CHANGE OF CLOTHES.
SNORT
LONG TIME NO SEE!
DID CHACHA SEND YOU TO GET ME?
GOOD BOY! WE'LL JOIN THEM SOON!

I'M GOING AHEAD!
KTA KTA KTA KTA
DM DM DM
WE'LL BE RIGHT BEHIND YOU!
DM DM DM

FW
SH
DM DM
WSH WSH
DM DM
DM
DM
DM
DM
DM

DM
DM
DM

TA-
TARA!
FOR
YOUR
COMMAND!
WE'RE
ALL
WAITING--

IT'S ALWAYS SUNNY AROUND THERE...

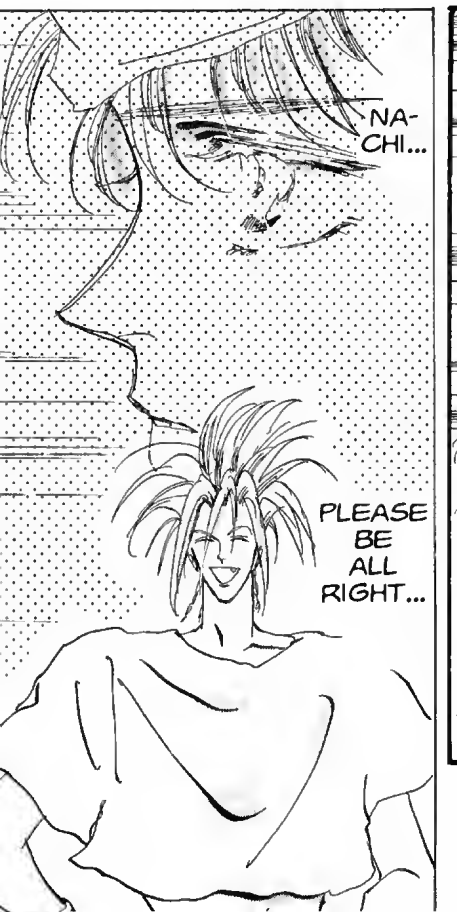
BUT PROMISE,
PLEASE.
DON'T WREAK HAVOC ON THE CITY.
DON'T TERRORIZE ITS PEOPLE.
HOLD YOUR CANNON FIRE.
THE ENEMY...
I KNOW.
I BELIEVE IN YOU.
DON'T WORRY, TATARA!
WE'RE NOT BANDITS!
CAUGHT UP.
TUG
ASA-GI!
NOW, NOW!
I'M BEAT!
THERE SHE GOES AGAIN, BEING NAÏVE.

OUR ENEMY...
...WHO KILLED MOMONOI OF THE NORTH...
IS THE RED KING!
OUR ENEMY--
IS IN THE PALACE!
IT'S TIME!
LET'S GO!

DM
Ah!
DM
DM
DM
DM
DM
DM
DM

I DIDN'T DREAM YOU'D BRING SO MANY PEOPLE!
DM
I'M STUNNED!
DM
DM
WE MADE MATCHING ARMOR.
WHAT DO YOU THINK?

THEY'LL REPORT ITS EVERY MOVE.
THEY'RE WATCHING UKON'S ARMY IN DAZAIFU.
AND WE STILL LEFT A LOT BEHIND IN SAKURA-JIMA.


NA-CHI...
PLEASE BE ALL RIGHT...

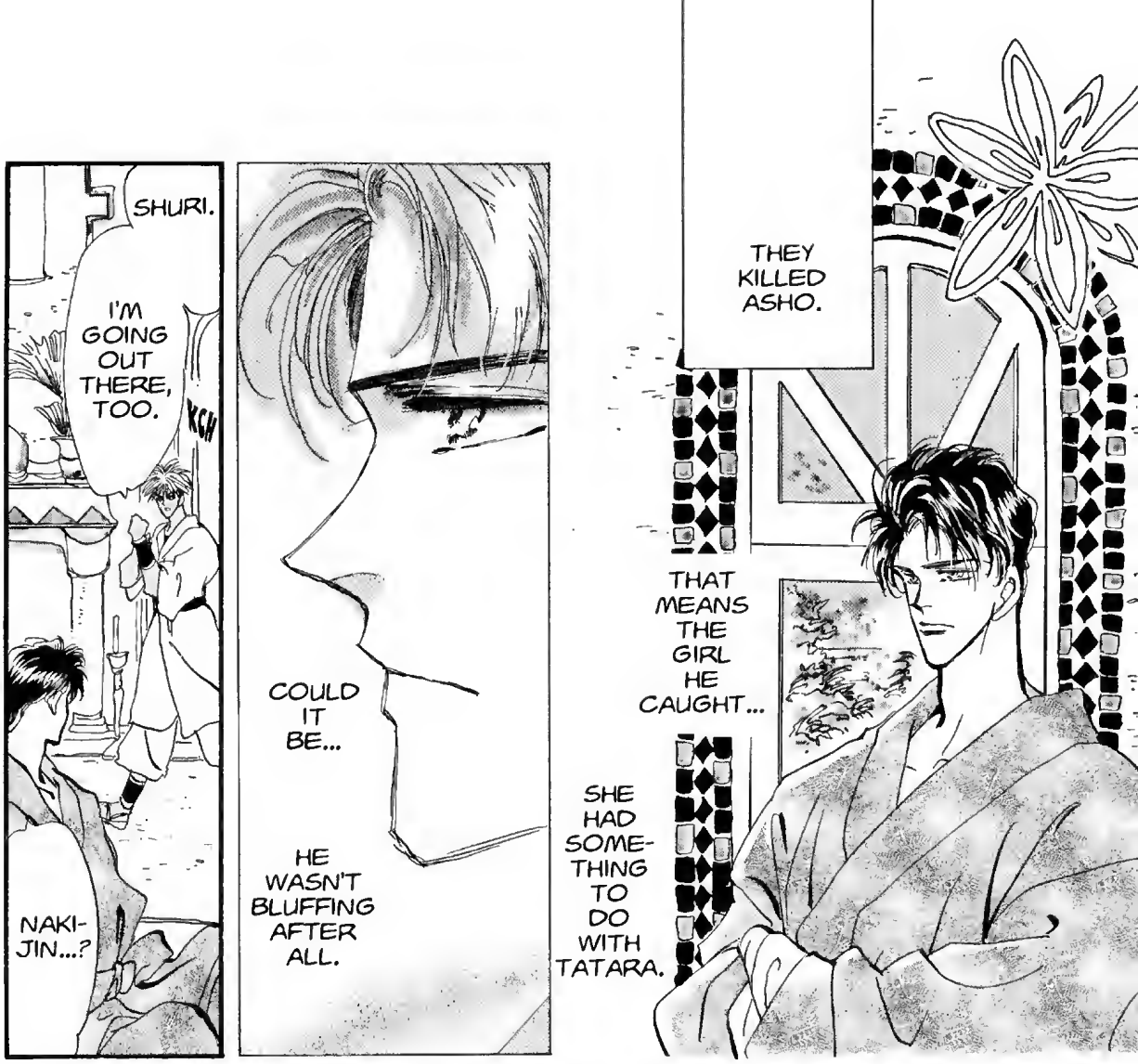
WE HAVE A PLAN FOR THAT.
NACHI'S INSIDE RIGHT NOW...

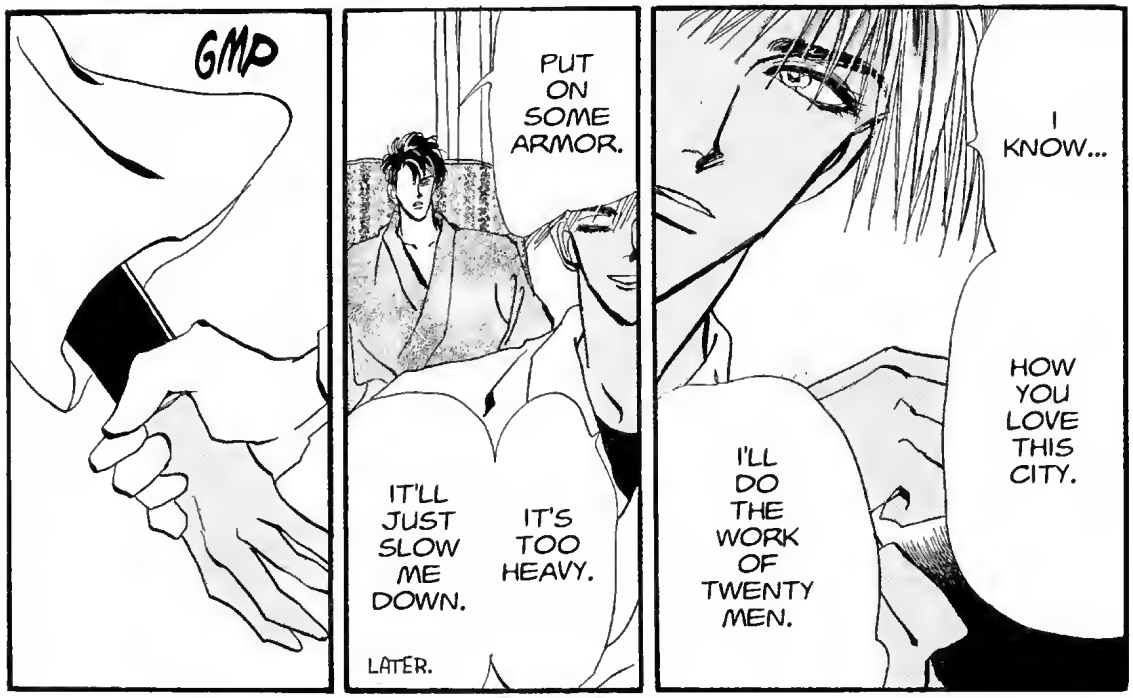
BUT YOU KNOW...
IT'LL BE HARD TO GET TO 'EM
IF THEY HOLE THEM-SELVES UP IN THAT PALACE.

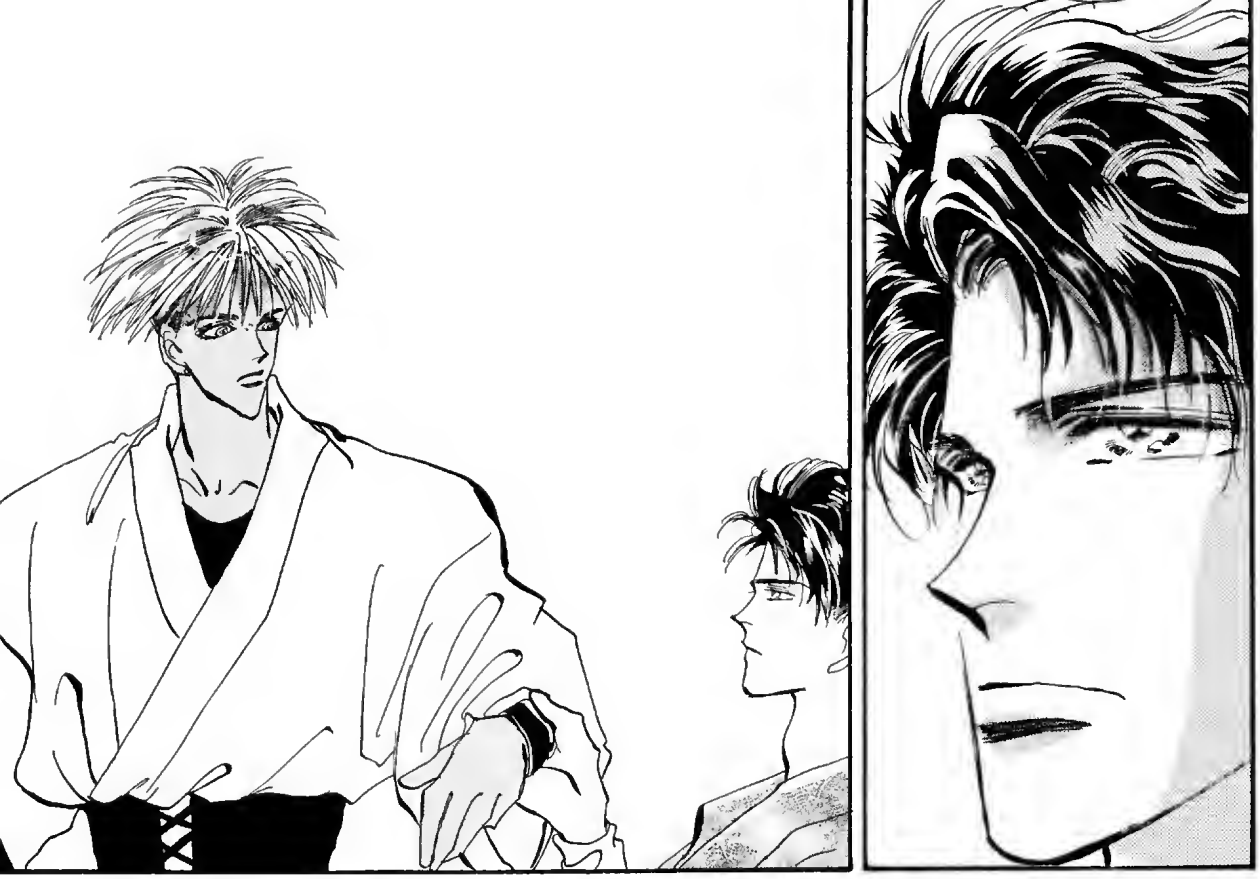
DM DM
YOU'RE A HARD WORKER!
DM DM DM
HA, HA, HA, HA!

WHAK!
NACHI
GUHHH!
NAKIJIN! TATARA'S ARMY IS MOVING!
BE RIGHT THERE.
WHO ARE YOU SPYING FOR!?
WHY ARE YOU TAKING THAT BODY!?
RG!
CAN'T LET HIS CHARMING PINE-APPLE HEAD FOOL ME...
HE'S... GOOD.
GUHHH!
WHUD

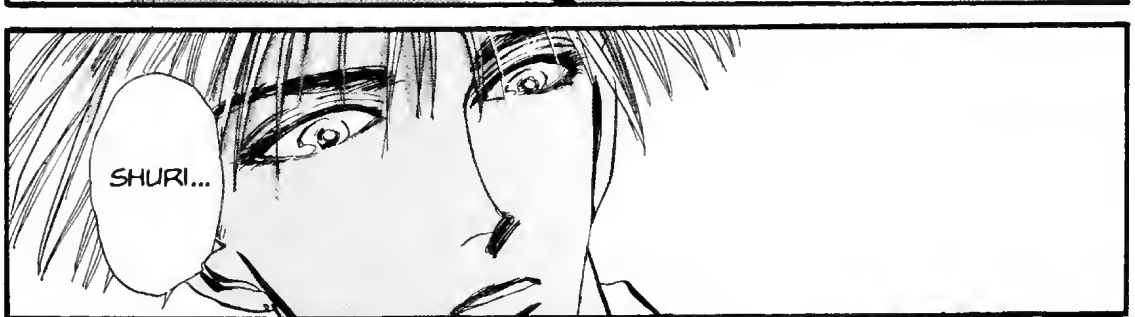
UFF.
UG!
GAG
KSH KSH
THAT TURNED ME INSIDE OUT...
BUT FIRST I HAVE TO...
GONE!
EH?
THERE HE IS!
NOW...
HUP.
BUT DON'T WORRY, HOZUMI.
NO!
DAMN!
THAT'S THE SPY NAKIJIN CAUGHT!
I'VE GOTTA FIND THE WELL... BLOW IT UP...
I'LL GET YOU OUTTA HERE.


THEY KILLED ASHO.
THAT MEANS THE GIRL HE CAUGHT...
SHE HAD SOME-THING TO DO WITH TATARA.
SHURI.
I'M GOING OUT THERE, TOO.
KCH
NAKI-JIN...?
COULD IT BE...
HE WASN'T BLUFFING AFTER ALL.


GMP
PUT ON SOME ARMOR.
IT'LL JUST SLOW ME DOWN.
IT'S TOO HEAVY.
LATER.
I KNOW...
HOW YOU LOVE THIS CITY.
I'LL DO THE WORK OF TWENTY MEN.

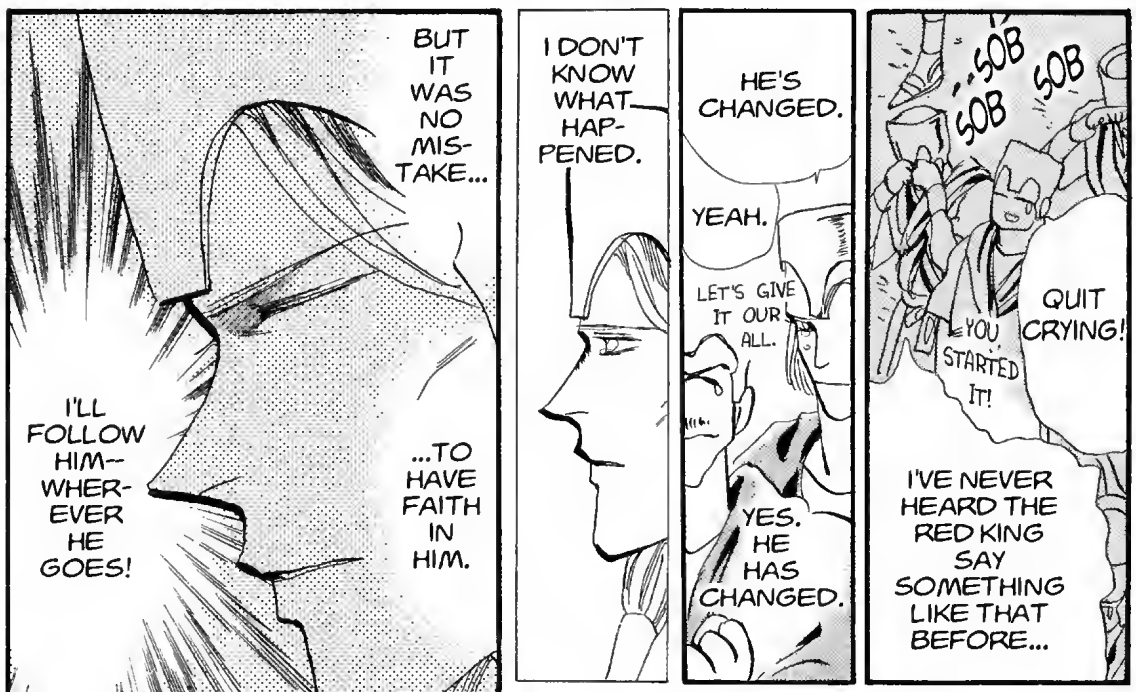


NAKI-
JIN.
DON'T
GET
HURT.
COME
BACK
ALIVE.


SHURI...

DO
YOU
HEAR?
THAT
GOES
FOR
ALL
OF
YOU.
WITHDRAW
QUICKLY
IF
YOU
MUST.
IF
WE'RE
BESIEGED
THIS
PALACE
WON'T
BE
EASILY
CAPTURED.

SO...
YOU'RE ALL I HAVE NOW.
STAY ALIVE.


BUT IT WAS NO MIS-TAKE...
...TO HAVE FAITH IN HIM.
I'LL FOLLOW HIM— WHER-EVER HE GOES!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAP-PENED.
HE'S CHANGED.
YEAH.
LET'S GIVE IT OUR ALL.
YES. HE HAS CHANGED.
SOB SOB SOB
QUIT CRYING!
YOU STARTED IT!
I'VE NEVER HEARD THE RED KING SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT BEFORE...

VERTICAL PROFILE ③

Nachi and Hijiri in the past...

They didn't get along at first.

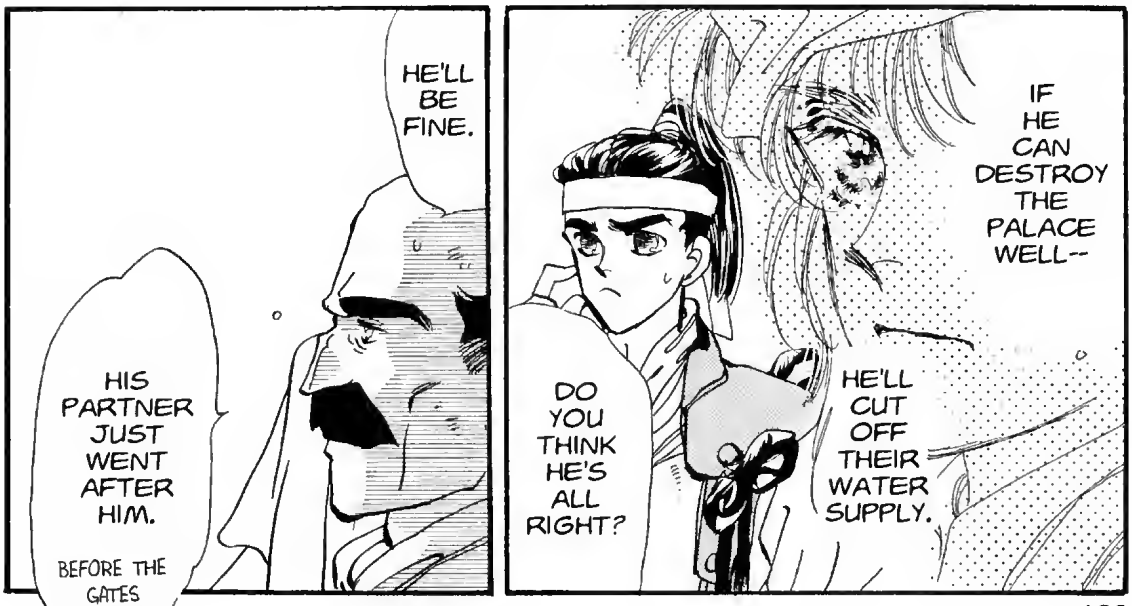
What happened between them!?

I'll try to do a bonus episode about it someday...

TAMU

NAKI-JIN!
LET'S GO BACK!
THE SUN IS SETTING!
FINE!
KA
CHANG
VSH
VSH
COME OUT!
COME OUT--
KA-RATE ...!?
RED KING!
VRRR
DM DM
TA-TARA!
THERE'S A KARATE MASTER--!

THREE MORE IRON DOORS...
HIGH WALLS.
STEEP, WINDING WALKWAYS.
AND THEY SEEM TO BE DIGGING IN.
INTER-ESTING.
MAYBE THEY DON'T HAVE ENOUGH MEN, EITHER.
NACHI'S STILL OUR BEST HOPE.

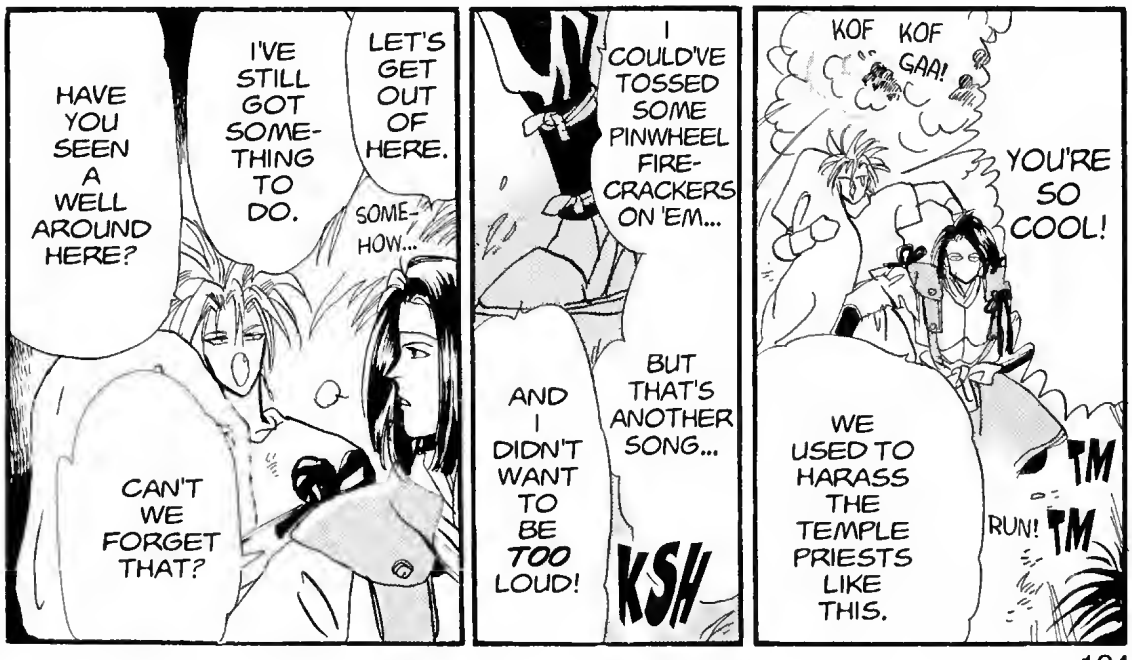

IF HE CAN DESTROY THE PALACE WELL--
HE'LL CUT OFF THEIR WATER SUPPLY.
DO YOU THINK HE'S ALL RIGHT?
HE'LL BE FINE.
HIS PARTNER JUST WENT AFTER HIM.
BEFORE THE GATES CLOSED.

HFF
HFF
HFF
GAA!
ROLL ROLL
EEP!
ZOK
ZOK
I'M IN TROUBLE!
IT STILL HURTS.
WHERE PINE-APPLE HEAD HIT ME...
KSH
DAMN!
ACK!
DOK
HIJIRI...

DAMN!
IF ONLY YOU WERE HERE!
NO POINT CALLING HIM, BUT...
NNNG
HIJIRI!
♪ TEN-TEN-TEMARI...
...WHAT!?
THERE IT BOUNDS... OUT OF REACH...
WHO'S THERE!?
SOME-ONE... SINGING!?
THERE IT FLIES...
AWAY AND AWAY...
TEN-TEMARI...

INTO THE STREET...
♪ OVER THE FENCE...
FSH
OVER THE ROOF...
WHOOMF
GUH!
IT BOUNDS AWAY...
IT BOUNDS AWAY...
HAK!

JUST CHILI POWDER.
ONE SERVING OF CHILI BOMB!
HIJIRI!


KOF KOF GAA!
YOU'RE SO COOL!
WE USED TO HARASS THE TEMPLE PRIESTS LIKE THIS.
TM
RUN! TM
I COULD'VE TOSSED SOME PINWHEEL FIRE-CRACKERS ON 'EM...
BUT THAT'S ANOTHER SONG...
AND I DIDN'T WANT TO BE TOO LOUD!
KSH
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE.
SOME-HOW...
I'VE STILL GOT SOME-THING TO DO.
HAVE YOU SEEN A WELL AROUND HERE?
CAN'T WE FORGET THAT?

NO.
IT'S MY JOB.
I'LL ATTRACT THE GUARDS' ATTENTION.
THERE'S ONE IN THAT COURTYARD.
THANKS!
GOT IT.
GET IT DONE.
SHOO.
LATER.
TM TM
THERE HE IS! OVER HERE!
HMPH!
ALL RIGHT THEN...
LET'S...
GET IT ON!

IF I HAD TIME, I'D CLIMB IN AND DIG A HOLE IN THE WALL.
THIS'LL DO.
TNK
WATER AT THE BOTTOM.
CAN'T GET THE GUN-POWDER WET.
AT LAST!
THE WELL!
THERE.
PFFT
SHF
AND...
TUG
GET OUTTA HERE!
SSS
HANG IT JUST ABOVE THE WATER...

ZZ
K
YOU!
WHAT'RE YOU DOING THERE!?
GMP
FWOOSH
NO!
IF IT FALLS IN--

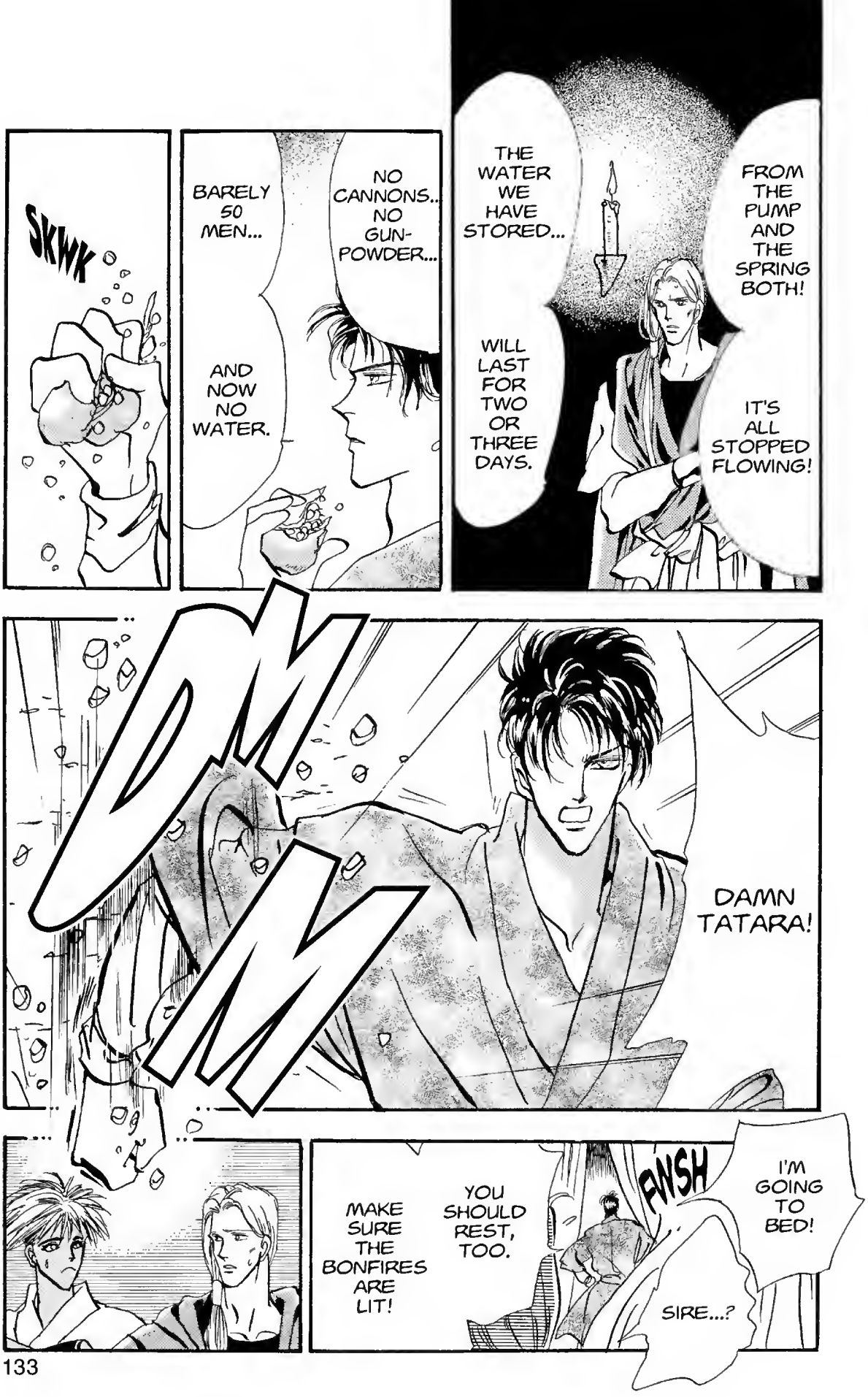
NOW YOU'RE CAUGHT!
HYAH--
TH
HEH.
IT'S NOT SO EASY TO TAKE--
ME.
THOK

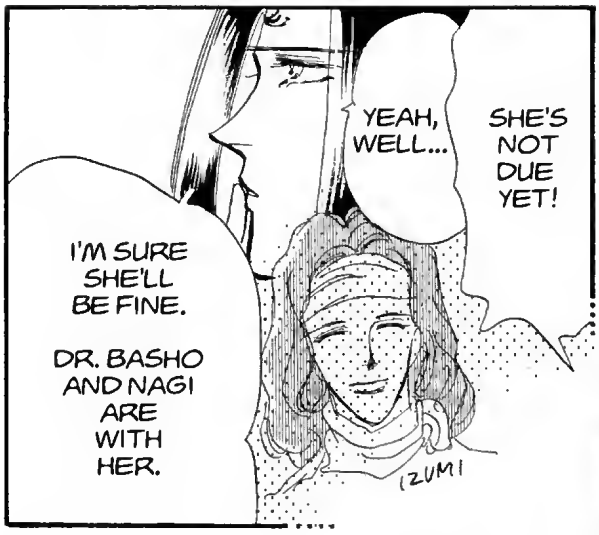
THK
PSH
VS
SH
NACHI!

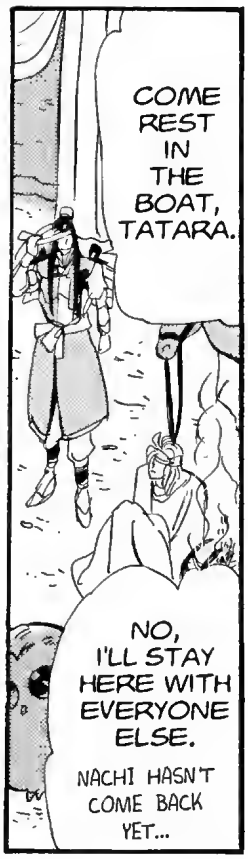
SSS
CAN'T...
CAN'T... LET GO.
JUST... A LITTLE LONGER.
NACHI!
NACHI!
ZSH
ZSH
ZSH
WAK
ZSH
JAB

PFF
TNK TNK

CUT OFF THE PALACE WATER SUPPLY...
AND THEY WON'T BE ABLE TO WAIT OUT THE SIEGE.
RED KING...
GOOD JOB, NACHI!
KAKU! HAYATO!
NOW SET OFF OUR BOMBS!
GOT IT!
THE FLARE!
NACHI DID IT!
RED KING!
YOU WILL SUFFER!
THE WATER!?


SKWK
BARELY 50 MEN...
NO CANNONS.. NO GUN-POWDER...
AND NOW NO WATER.
THE WATER WE HAVE STORED...
WILL LAST FOR TWO OR THREE DAYS.
FROM THE PUMP AND THE SPRING BOTH!
IT'S ALL STOPPED FLOWING!
DAMN TATARA!
MAKE SURE THE BONFIRES ARE LIT!
YOU SHOULD REST, TOO.
FNSH
I'M GOING TO BED!
SIRE...?





UH...NAGI'S GREAT TOO. SORRY, NAGI.

WHERE'S PRINCESS SENJU?
SHE'S STAYING BY IZUMI'S SIDE.
SHE'S BEEN SO DOCILE LATELY.
I HOPE...
THE BIRTH GOES SMOOTHLY.
ME, TOO.
THESE WOMEN BRING FORTH LIFE...
...AND THE REST OF US END LIFE.
WHY IS IT LIKE THIS...?
TO CREATE A WORLD WHERE WE DON'T HAVE TO FEAR BEING KILLED...
WE HAVE NO CHOICE... BUT TO KILL.

NACHI!
NACHI!
AGH!
IT HURTS!
YOU'RE FINE AS LONG AS YOU'RE FEELING THE PAIN.
NOW THAT YOU SAY THAT...
IT...
...DOESN'T HURT AS MUCH ANYMORE...
FOOL!
KEEP FEELING IT!
GUYS LIKE YOU--
ARE SUPPOSED TO BE INDESTRUCT-IBLE!
OWW...
WE'VE GOTTA... TAKE HOZUMI...
GRAB ON.
LET'S GO.
HE'S DEAD! LEAVE HIM!
WHO IS HE ANYWAY!?
WE CAN'T...
WE'VE... GOT TO TAKE HIM...

I HAVE TO BURY HIM...
ALONG-SIDE RENKO...
YOU'RE MAKING ME CARRY TWO PEOPLE!?
YOU'RE HEAVY ENOUGH BY YOURSELF!
DO NOT--
MAKE ME BURY YOU, TOO!
NG
NACHI!
NO.
HANG ON.
YOU'VE GOT TO STOP BLEED-ING.
STOP.

I'LL GIVE YOU MY BLOOD!
JUST DON'T DIE!
CHMP
RRIP
COME ON...
I'M NO VAMPIRE.
IT WON'T HELP...
TO DRINK IT.
HOW CAN YOU BE SURE!?
DRINK IT!
BETTER A VAMPIRE THAN A CORPSE!

NACHI...
DON'T DIE ON ME...
DON'T GO.
DON'T ...
CAN THEY GET US THROUGH!?
HORSES ...

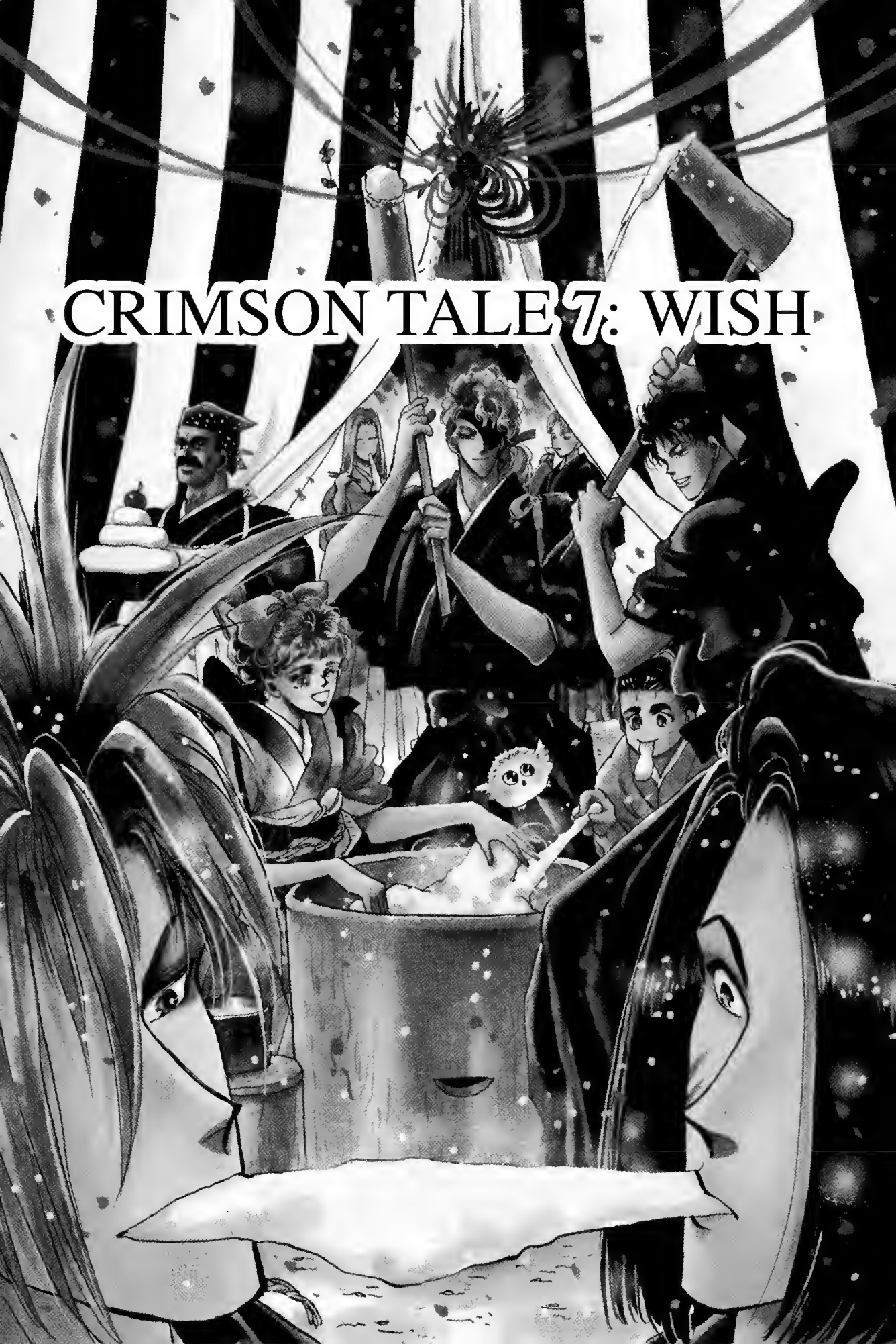
NACHI.
WHEN WE DIE, WE DIE TO-GETHER.
NO WAY... DIE BY YOUR-SELF...
ZZG ZZG
THANKS A LOT.
SAKAKI?
AH, SIRE. YOU'RE AWAKE.

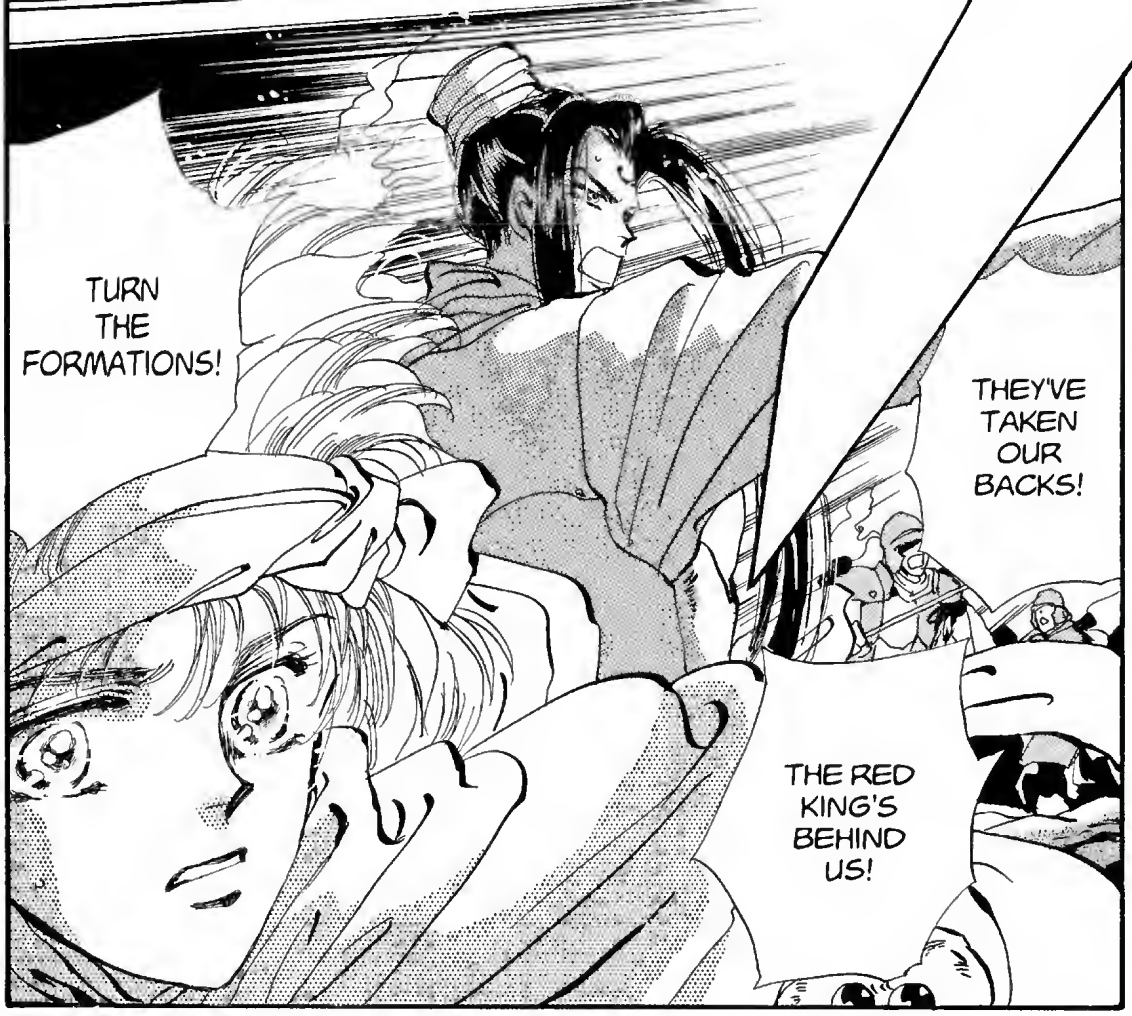
I'VE PRE-PARED...
...A SET OF ARMS FOR YOU.
IF YOU ARE READY.
HM?
I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU THAT WE'RE RESTING DURING THE SIEGE.
AS IF YOU'D PUT UP WITH THAT.
NAKI-JIN...
ARE YOU READING MY MIND AGAIN?
TATARA MAY HAVE FIGURED IT OUT, TOO.
WSH!
WAKE ALL THE MEN!
LET'S GO!

WITH SO MANY WOUNDED...
KRII
LET ME KNOW IF ANYTHING CHANGES.
ZSH
TO ESCAPE.
NOW IS MY CHANCE--
OH... IS THE PAIN WORSE?
NNH ...
I MUST FIND THE RED KING--
AND TELL HIM THE TRUTH--
THAT TATARA IS A GIRL NAMED SARASA!

TATARA. YOU'RE STILL AWAKE?
SOME-THING ON YOUR MIND?
I HAVE AN OMINOUS FEELING.
IT'S JUST THAT...
BUT WHY...?
HWOOOO
FOOM
THE RED KING...
WOULD NEVER...
JUST SIT... AND WAIT.
THP

THEY'VE GOTTEN BEHIND US!
BEHIND US!
THE RED ARMY!
GYAAA!
DID THEY GET THERE!?
HOW...
WHEN...
THP
ZFF
VIN
THP
YAAA!
GHH!


CRIMSON TALE 7: WISH



TINY TAM-TAM TIME (4)

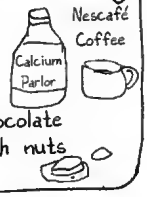
There's no bonus at the end of this volume (Sorry!), but the time is near for what you've all been waiting for in the story--so stay tuned for Volume 15!
Check out Betsu-Comi and Deluxe Comics, too! ♡ I've been doing a lot of illustrations here and there, so watch for those too.

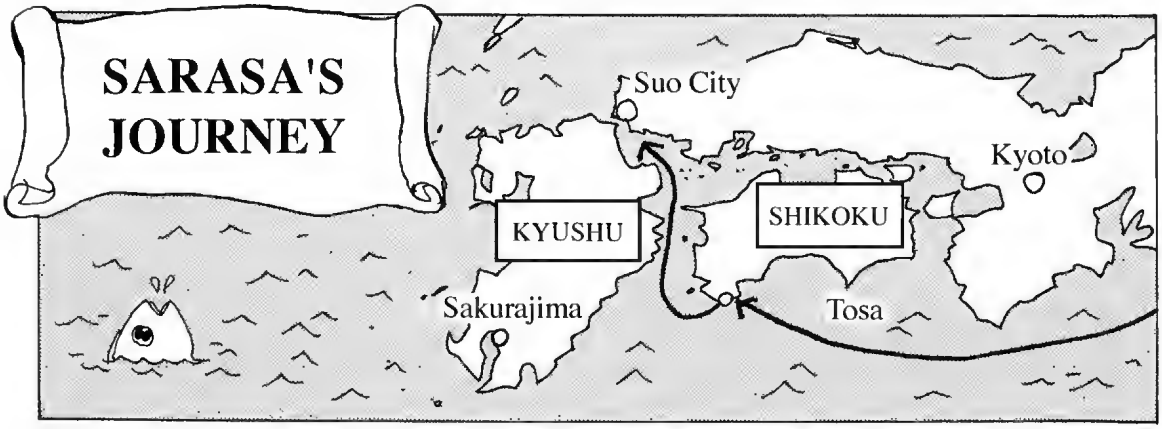
SEE YOU LATER! WRITE ME! ♡ TAMU.

Take care, everyone!
I'm going on vacation soon (I think), so I'll write about it in another Tam-Tam!

Check out the BASARA CD!

Things I love: (4)





IDIOT.

DO YOU *WANT* TO KILL YOURSELF?

FORGIVE ME.

BUT THIS PATH NEVER OCCURRED TO ME.

SIRE...

I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO TAKE THEM HEAD-ON.

THERE WERE NO OTHER SECRET PASSAGES...

FOOM

BUT I THOUGHT OUR VICTORY WAS FINALLY AT HAND.

WAS IT ONLY A DREAM...?

SOME PART OF ME KNEW.

HE'D NEVER QUIETLY SUCCUMB TO A SIEGE.

NOT HIM...

IT CAN'T BE!

THERE MUST'VE BEEN ANOTHER WAY OUT!

ALL THE UNDERGROUND PASSAGES WERE BURIED!

BAD

DON'T SCATTER!

HOLD YOUR GROUND!

PROTECT TATARA!

...THAT WHEN THEY CUT OFF THE WATER TO THE PALACE...
NOT EVEN TATARA WOULD'VE DREAMED...
STOP TALKING...
WE COULD USE THE DRIED UP WATERWAYS AS AN ALTERNATE ROUTE!
...AND GO GET ME TATARA'S HEAD.
YES, SIR!

THE RED KING...
DON'T PANIC!
DON'T GET SPLIT UP!
STAY TO-GETHER!
THE RED KING...
...IS RIGHT BEFORE MY EYES.
DM DM DM
RAAA
NO!
STAY IN ONE PLACE!
WE'LL BE TRAPPED!
HE'S THERE.
RIGHT THERE!
...TA-TARA!?

I WILL NOT LOSE!

BETTER TO SPREAD TO THE FLANKS AND SURROUND THEM!
THERE AREN'T MANY OF THEM--

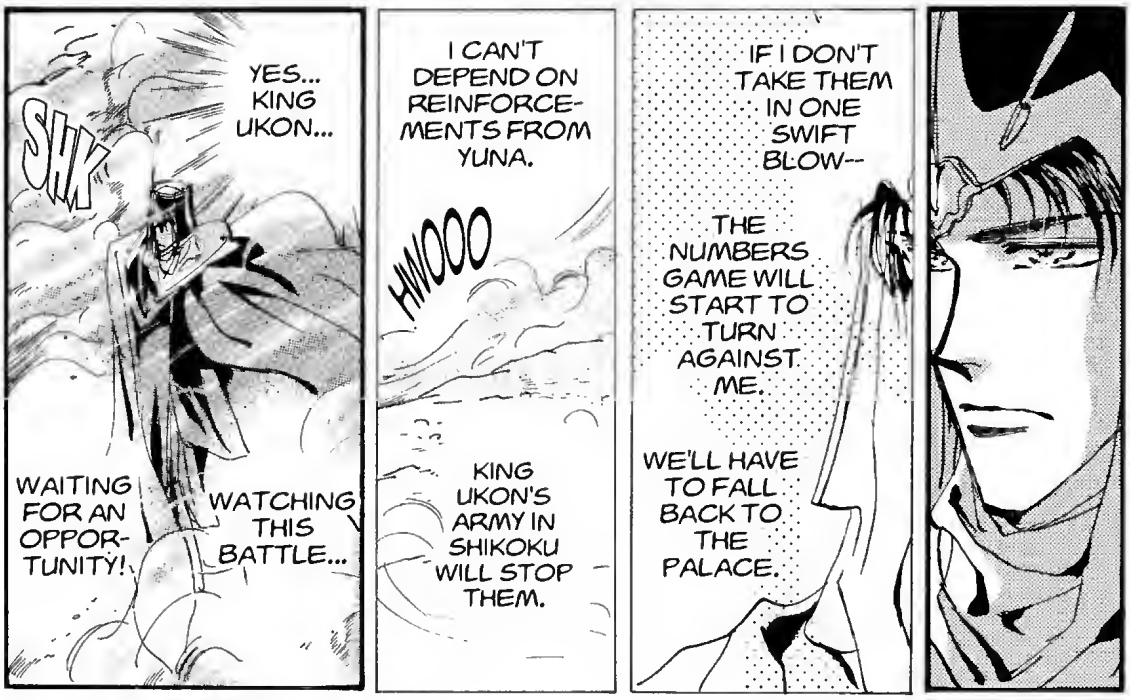
HAYATO!
CHA-CHA!
TAKE HALF THE MEN TO THE RIGHT!
TAKE THE REST LEFT!

SPREAD OUT!
ALL WE HAVE TO SECURE IS A PATH OF RETREAT TO THE SHIP!
WE'RE NOT DEFENDING A CASTLE!

GOT IT!
I'M COUNTING ON YOU!
WHERE'S ASAGI!?
SAY!
WHERE'D HE GET OFF TO NOW!?
BASTARD!
SHE'S RIGHT.
LET'S GO!
SHE DOES INSPIRE CONFIDENCE...
...INSISTING THAT SHE DIDN'T WANT TO FIGHT.
JUST THE OTHER DAY, SHE WAS CRYING...
YOU'RE DANCING ON A FINE LINE...
...HELD TAUT ONLY BY YOUR HATRED OF THE RED KING.
ARE YOU AWARE OF THAT, TATARA?
BUT IT'S A FRAGILE COURAGE.
SHE STANDS HER GROUND.
NOW, FACED WITH THE RED KING...

NOT NOW... NOT YET...
I CAN ONLY HOPE THE LINE DOESN'T SNAP.

THE ENEMY'S TAKEN THE STORK WING FORMATION!
RAAAAA
SIRE!


SHK
YES... KING UKON...
WAITING FOR AN OPPOR-TUNITY!
WATCHING THIS BATTLE...
I CAN'T DEPEND ON REINFORCE-MENTS FROM YUNA.
HMOOO
KING UKON'S ARMY IN SHIKOKU WILL STOP THEM.
IF I DON'T TAKE THEM IN ONE SWIFT BLOW--
THE NUMBERS GAME WILL START TO TURN AGAINST ME.
WE'LL HAVE TO FALL BACK TO THE PALACE.

RAN-MARU.
WHAT OF KING UKON'S ARMY IN DAZAIFU?
I HAVE THEM ON STANDBY, SIR.
THE STORK WING FOR-MATION, HUH?
NOT BAD, TATARA.
UME-WAKA.
WHAT OF KYOTO?
THOSE FORCES SHOULD BE APPROACHING LIGHTHOUSE FORT.
SIR...
AFTER THE REPRIMAND AT ABASHIRI...
I'M NOW THE LEADER.
...HE'S BEEN SUSPENDED AND STRIPPED OF HIS COMMAND.
HEH.
THIS IS SO MUCH FUN!
OH, AND...
WHAT'S MURA-TAKE DOING?
ONE WORD FROM YOU, SIR...
AND THEY'LL COME TO ATTACK SUO.

THE RED KING MUST DIE SOONER OR LATER...
BUT FOR NOW...
HE HAS QUITE A FIGHTER IN HIS ARMY.
HE MUST BE THE KARATE MASTER EVERYONE TALKS ABOUT.
I NEED TATARA...
TO LIVE A WHILE LONGER.
YOU'RE GOING TO STAY ON TATARA'S SIDE, SIR?
SS
FOR NOW.
RAN-MARU.
HANDI-CAP HIM.
YES, SIR.
FSH
WAM
WAM
WHAK

POP
PCH
WHAT HAPPENED?
THE SOLDIERS ARE GONE...
DID THEY...
...GO OUT TO JOIN THE BATTLE?
ZA
VVV
ASU

EASY.
SNORT
WHOA, BOY.
BE QUIET.
SHF
NOW'S OUR CHANCE.
WAIT HERE.
I'LL GET A HORSE.
FMP
DON'T YOU TOUCH HIM!
HEY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?

HIS CONDITION ISN'T GOOD. YOU SHOULD TAKE HIM TO A DOCTOR.
SHH.
I STOPPED THE BLEEDING.
KCH KCH
PING
SKSH
.....
THERE YOU GO.
BUT IT'S LOCKED.
I'LL OPEN IT. HOLD ON.
IS THIS FOR REAL?
OH.
HURRY, YOU CAN GET OUT THROUGH THIS DOOR.
...WHO ARE YOU?
I AM INDEBTED TO NACHI FOR HIS ASSISTANCE IN ABASHIRI.
HWOOO
IT'S FASTER TO JUMP DOWN HERE...
CAN YOU DO IT?
THAN FOLLOW THE PATHS.
WANT TO JOIN THE TENGU FACTION?
KRI!!
...I'LL THINK ABOUT IT.

WILL DO.
WHIP!
HEAH!
AND I'LL RETURN THE FAVOR SOMEDAY.
PLEASE TELL NACHI THAT MURATAKE HAS REPAID HIS DEBT.

IT'S NOT LIKE I HAVE A CHOICE.
THANKS!

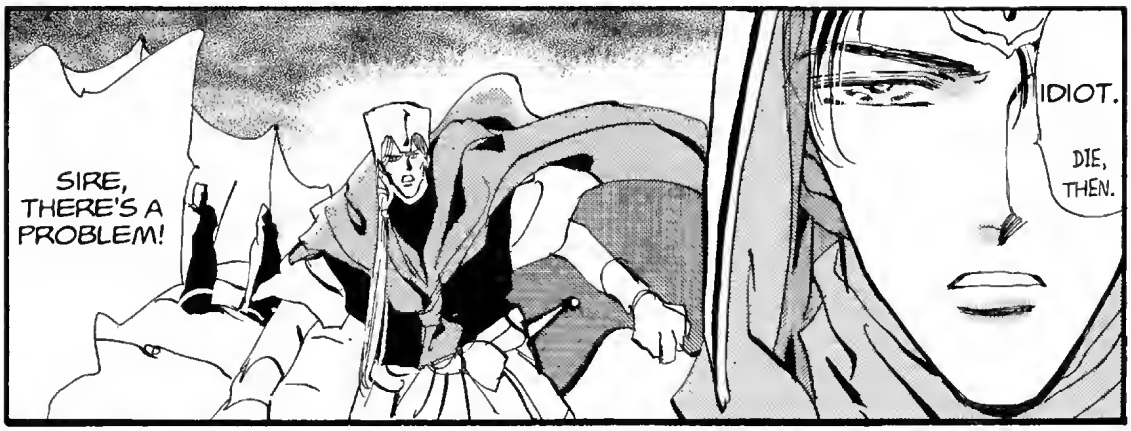
KTA KTA
NACHI HAS HIS DEBTS. I HAVE MINE.
I WANT NO MORE TIES.
HUH?
I MEANT THIS TO BE THE END.
SEE YOU LATER.

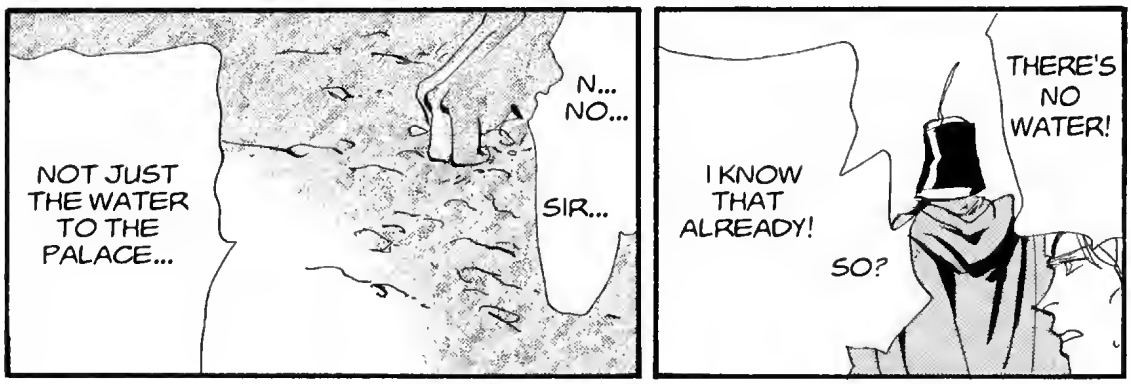
HWOOO
PHEW!
...NACHI.
HERE WE GO.
THIS IS NOTHING LIKE THE MOUNTAINS OF KUMANO.

...
YOU SHOULD GET OUT OF HERE...
BEFORE KING UKON'S ARMY ARRIVES.

DON'T BITE YOUR TONGUE!
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
NAKI-JIN.
STUPID IDIOT.
I'M FINE.
I TOLD YOU TO WEAR ARMOR.
WHAT KIND OF WEAPON WAS THAT, ANYWAY?
TUG
FEH!

I WANT YOU ALIVE!
DON'T MAKE ME SAY IT AGAIN!
DON'T GO BACK OUT.
TAKE A BREAK.
THIS IS NOTHING.
THANKS!
BUT THAT'S WHY...
I'M GOING BACK OUT.


SIRE, THERE'S A PROBLEM!
IDIOT.
DIE, THEN.


NOT JUST THE WATER TO THE PALACE...
N... NO...
SIR...
I KNOW THAT ALREADY!
SO?
THERE'S NO WATER!

TATARA, CAN YOU SEE IT!?
YAA
RAAA
WE'VE GOT THE ADVANTAGE!
WE'RE RETAKING GROUND!
YES!
KEEP GOING!
INTO THE RED KING'S STRONGHOLD!
...A ROCK?
TOK

TOK
TOK
TK
OW!
IT'S...
THE PEOPLE FROM THE CITY!?
THE CITY'S WATER...
IT'S YOUR FAULT.
IT'S DRIED UP...
THE WATER...
WHAT'S THIS!?
HAYATO!
ARE THEY SIDING WITH THE RED KING!?

... WHAT ...?
THE SPRINGS HAVE CAVED IN!
ALL THE WELLS HAVE DRIED UP!
FROM NOW ON--
THERE WILL NEVER BE WATER IN SUO AGAIN!

IT WAS ONLY...
SUPPOSED TO BE THE PALACE...
BUT...
THAT'S NOT...
YOU ARE THE EXECUTIONER!
"A LAND WHERE WE NEED NOT FEAR THE EXECUTIONER"!?
WHO HAS KILLED THIS LAND!
YOU ARE THE ONE--
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE!?
YOU'VE KILLED US ALL!

TATARA!
GET OUT!
TOK
TATARA!
DM
DM
DM

NACHI...
DOM
DOM
NACHI'S ABOUT TO DIE!
I'M TAKING HIM TO THE SHIP!
DOM!

TATARA!
I'LL HAVE YOUR HEAD!
OSH
IT'S TATARA!
OH!
ZA
SHA

MY SENSES...
...ARE FADING.
I CAN SEE...
...ONLY DARK.
I'M SOAKING EVERYONE I LOVE...
...IN BLOOD.
THE TIGHTROPE CAN'T BE BROKEN...
WIPE THE BLOOD OFF.
NOT NOW! NOT YET!
GET A HOLD OF YOUR-SELF!
KAKU...
KAKU...
I CAN'T.
I CAN'T HOLD MY SWORD.
KASHENG
MY OWN PALMS...
...ARE STAINED RED.

GET OUT!
THE PLANTS WILL WITHER AND DIE.
IT WILL BECOME A DESERT.
THE LAND WILL BE DRY AS DUST.
IS IT MY RIGHT?
...TO DESTROY THE CITY BECAUSE IT BELONGS TO THE RED KING?
...FOR THIS!
WE WEREN'T FIGHTING...
...IS FALLING...
INTO HELL.
YOUR SISTER...
TATARA!
TATARA!
BROTHER!

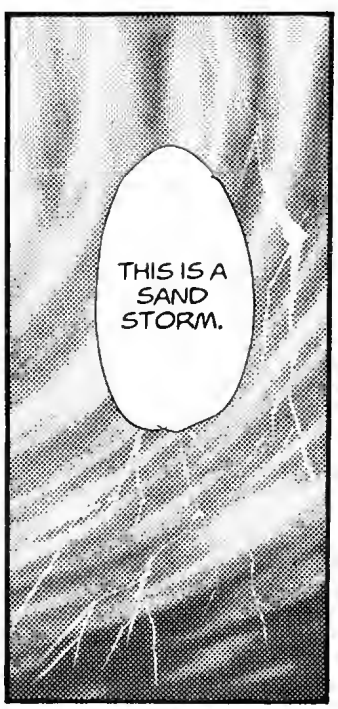
WHAT DID I WISH FOR?

SO THE WATER TO THE CITY IS GONE.
SAKAKI, YOUR AQUEDUCT MIGHT END UP USELESS.
HOW COULD THIS BE...?
IT WAS SUCH A BEAUTI-FUL CITY...

WHAT
DID I
WANT?

WHAT DID I WANT?
SOMETHING I HAD LONGED FOR...
I CAN'T SEE IT ANYMORE...
I CAN'T SEE IT ANYMORE.

HNOOOO
KRAK
KKRK
HSSSH
FALLING.
INTO HELL.


THIS IS A SAND STORM.

A STORM?
YOU GET TYPHOONS HERE, TOO?
THERE WON'T BE ANY RAIN.

IT LOOKS LIKE THERE'S GOING TO BE A STORM.

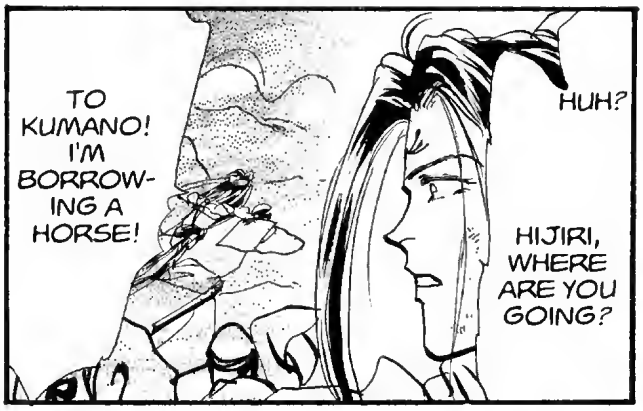
SAKAKI.
LEAD EVERY-ONE BACK TO THE PALACE.
I'LL JOIN YOU LATER.
YES, SIR.

H/O

TATARA--
YOU CAN'T BE LIKED BY EVERYBODY ALL THE TIME.

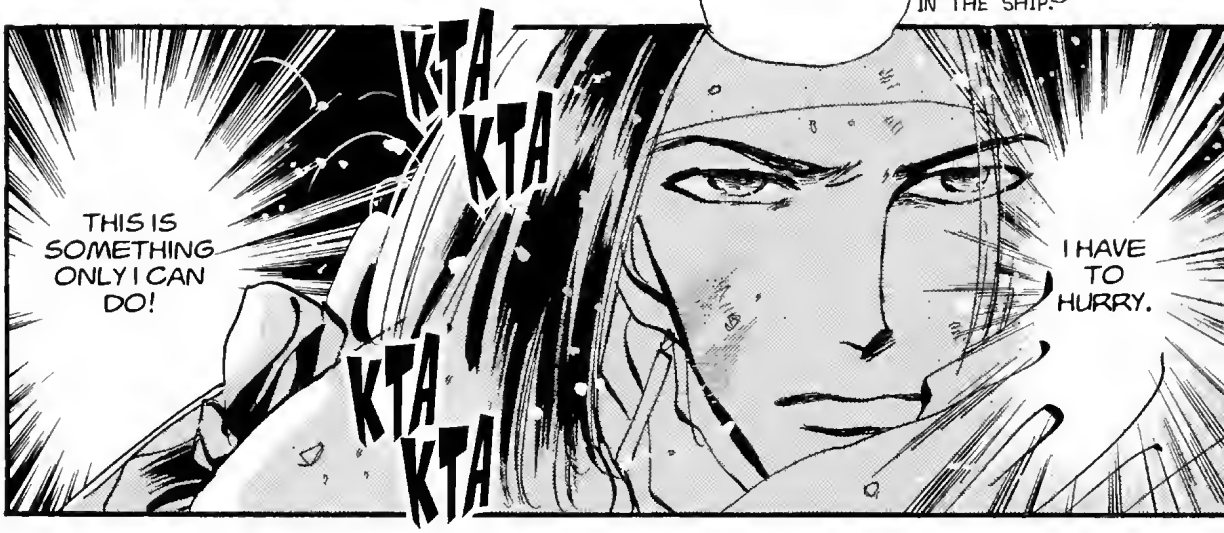
CHA-CHA.
LET'S TAKE THE TOWNS-PEOPLE, TOO.
DON'T BE INSANE!

YAA
THE SHIP IS IN DANGER!
WE CAN DODGE THE STORM AT SEA!
EVERYONE, FALL BACK!

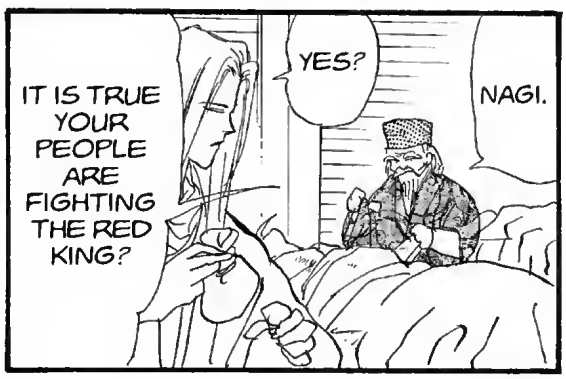

TO KUMANO! I'M BORROW-ING A HORSE!
HUH?
HIJIRI, WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

BUT A STORM'S COMING!
KTA KTA
!?
KUMANO? FROM HERE!?

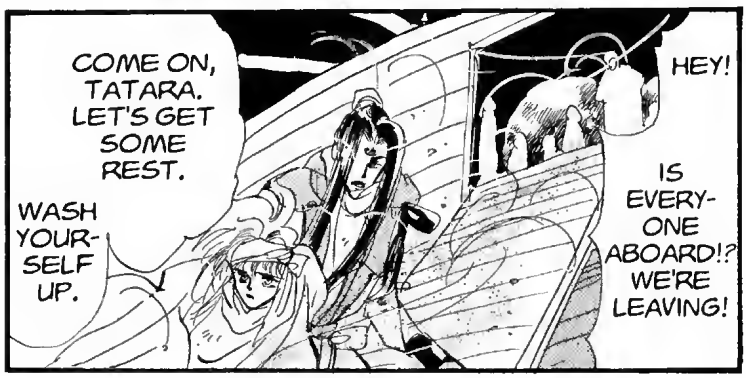
NAGI!
DR. BASHO!
TAKE CARE OF NACHI!
OF COURSE. HE'S A TOUGH GUY. HE WON'T DIE.
IN THE SHIP.

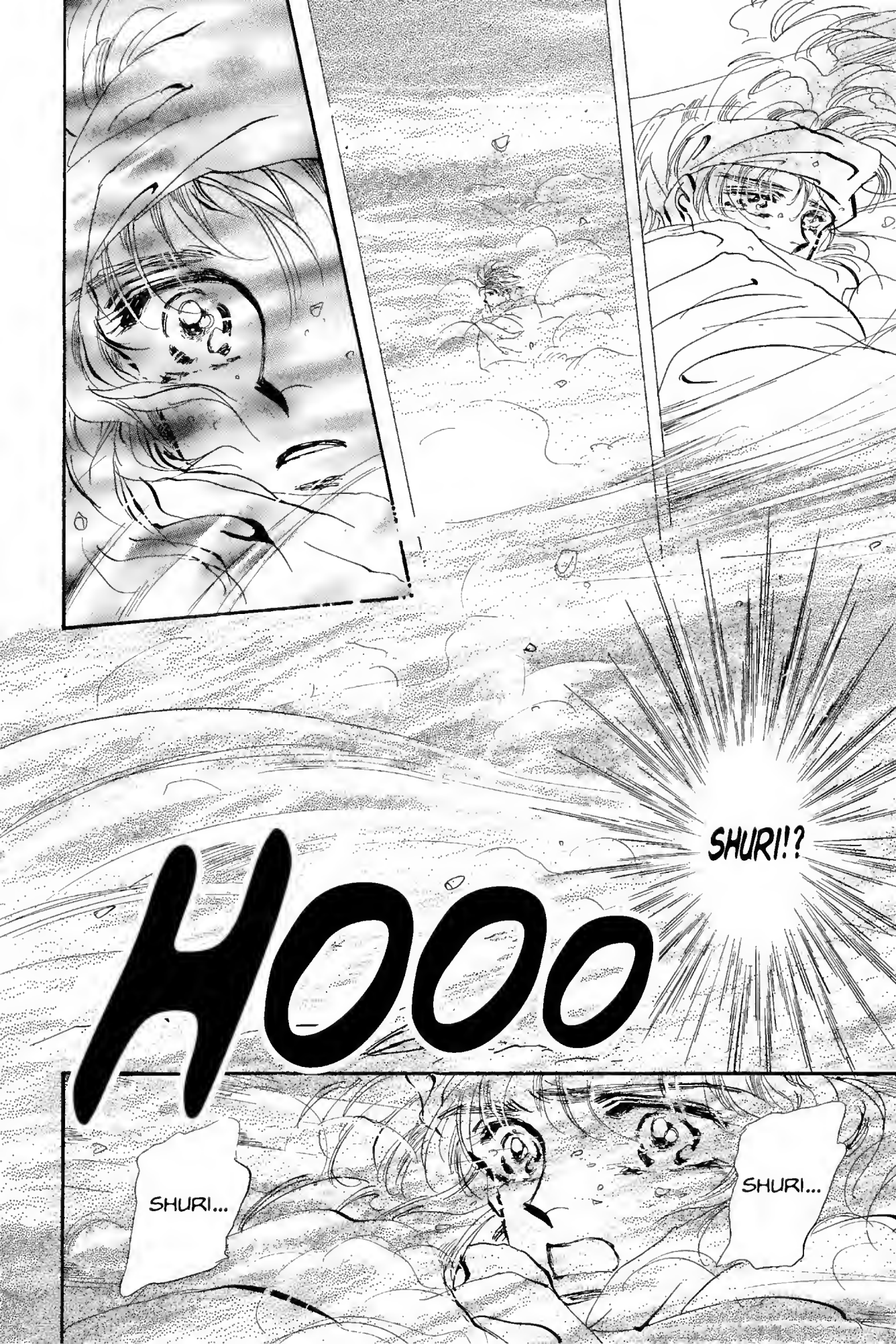

KTA KTA KTA KTA
THIS IS SOMETHING ONLY I CAN DO!
I HAVE TO HURRY.

THAT SARASA IS FIGHTING THE RED KING?
DOESN'T THAT MEAN...
YES. BUT IT'S A SECRET.
WELL...

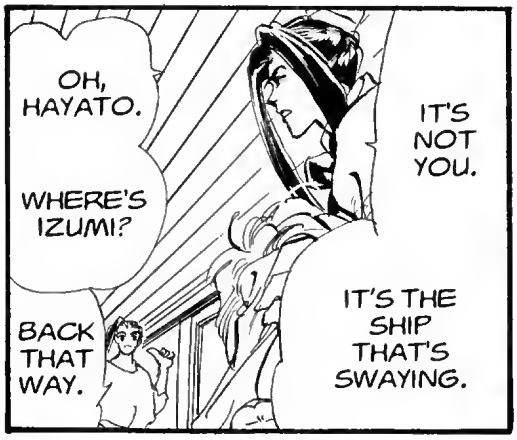

IT IS TRUE YOUR PEOPLE ARE FIGHTING THE RED KING?
YES?
NAGI.

VERTICAL TAM-TAM TIME ④




SHURI!?
HOOO
SHURI...
SHURI...

...WAS IT AN ILLUSION!?
IT HAD TO BE.
BUT I STILL WANT TO SEE HIM...

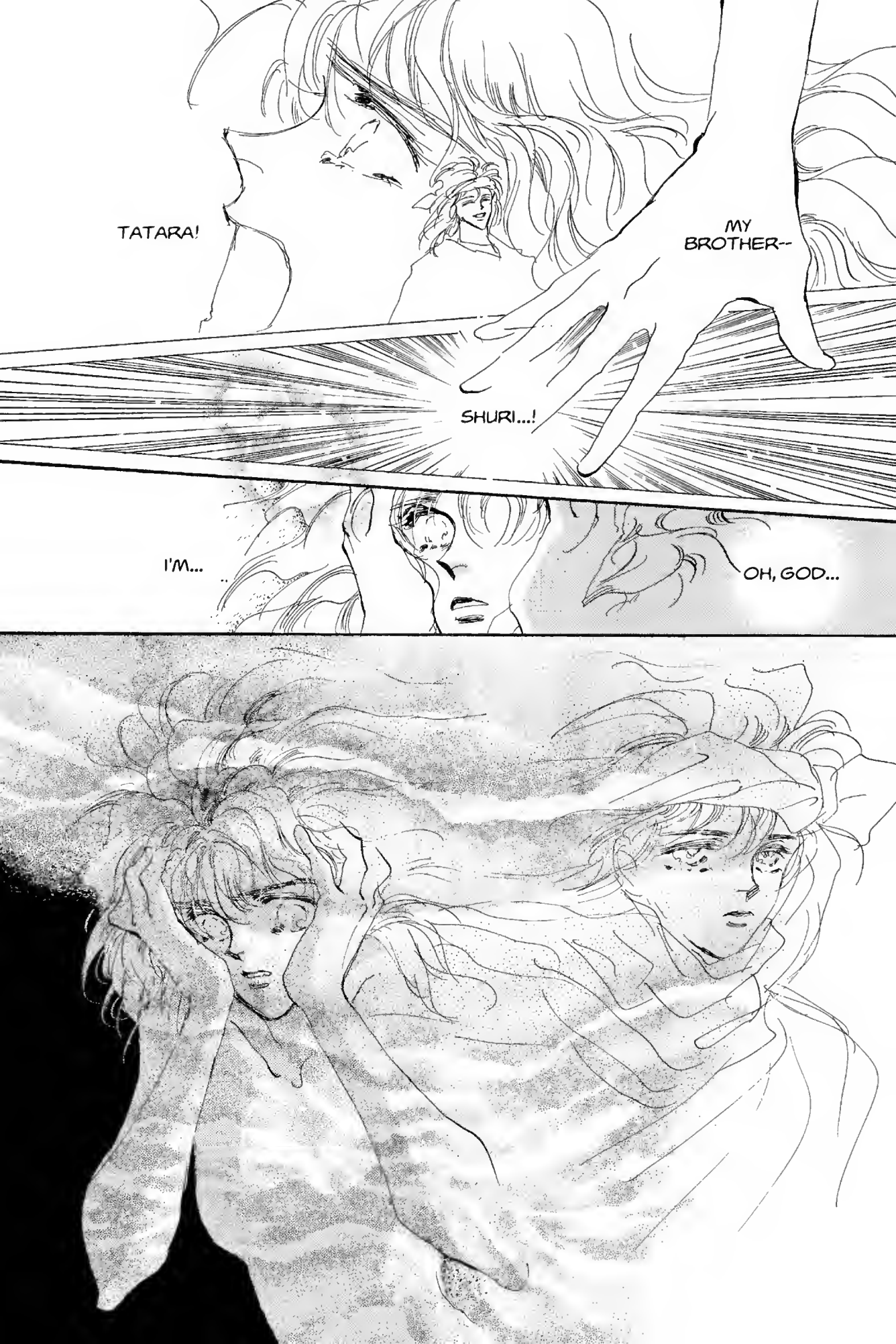

OH, HAYATO.
WHERE'S IZUMI?
BACK THAT WAY.
IT'S NOT YOU.
IT'S THE SHIP THAT'S SWAYING.

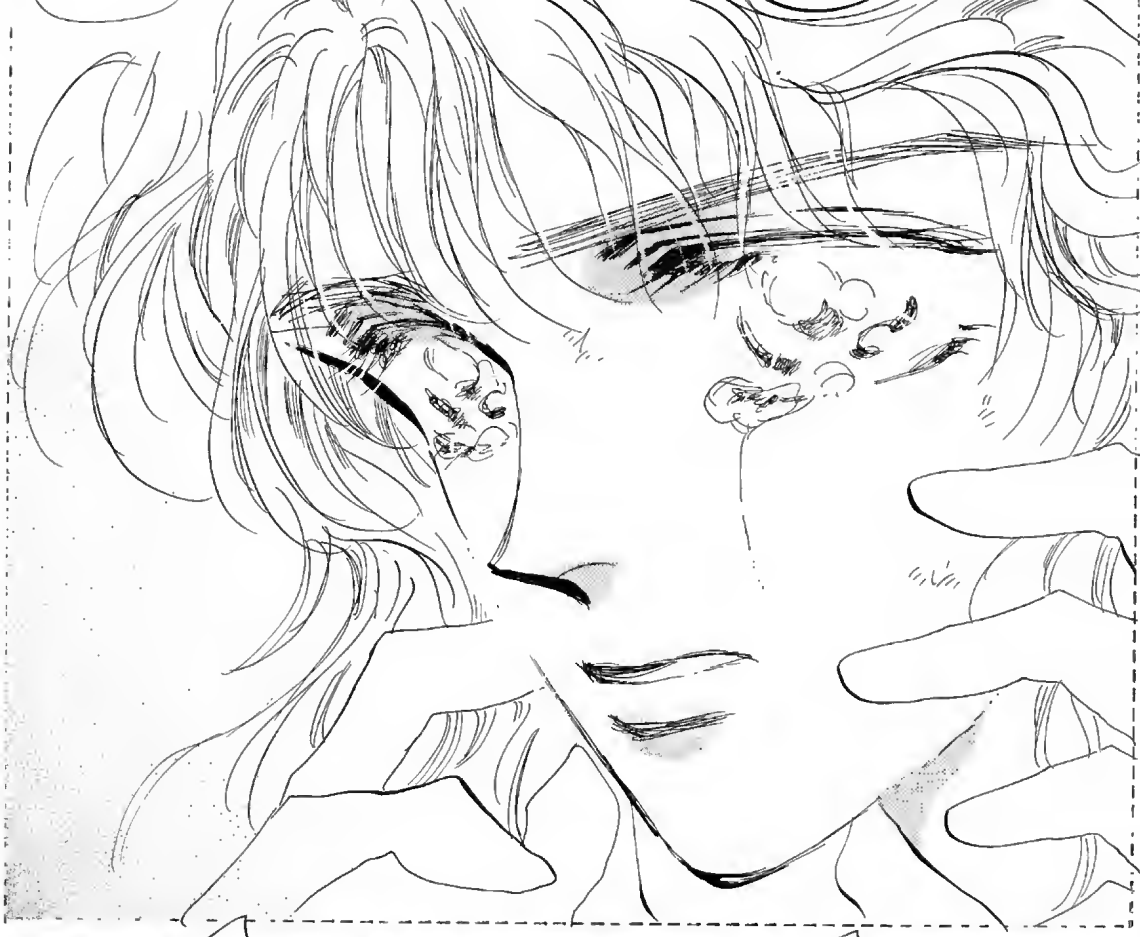
I...
I FEEL... LIKE I'M SWAY-ING.

THE BABY'S COMING SOON.
KRII
TA-TARA.
LET'S GO PAY A VISIT TO IZUMI.

OH...
I'M...
SORRY, YOU'RE RIGHT.
LOOK HOW FILTHY YOU ARE.
DO YOU THINK THAT'S GOOD FOR A WOMAN IN LABOR?
PLEASE. KEEP OUT.
PRINCESS SENJU.
HOW IS...?
...HELP BRING *LIFE* INSTEAD OF *DEATH!*
FOR ONCE...
YOU'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND...
ANY OF OUR PAIN AND SUFFERING.
EVEN IF YOU'RE A WOMAN...

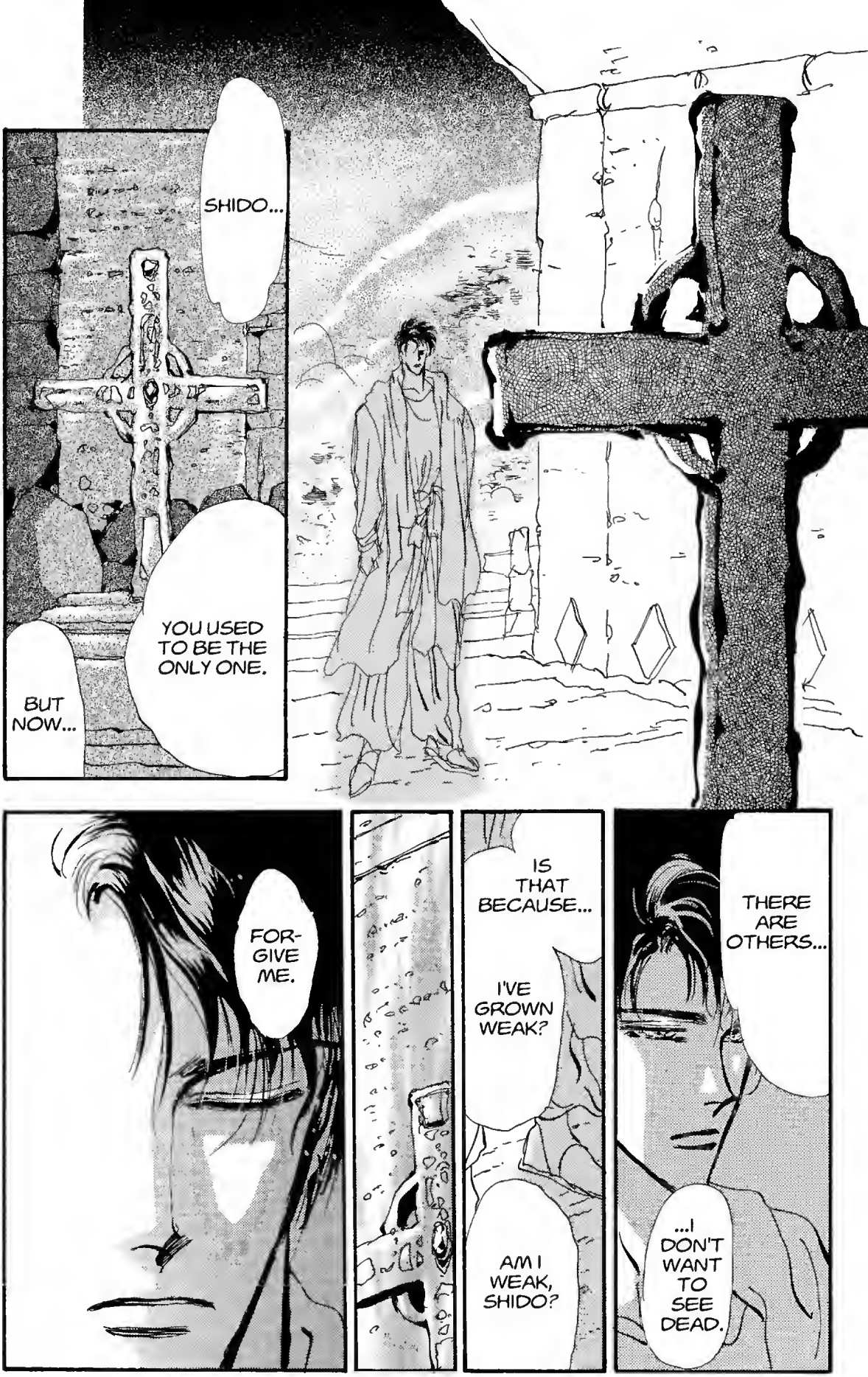
THAT'S WHY YOU CAN KILL...
WITHOUT A SECOND THOUGHT.
EVEN THOUGH I'M A WOMAN...
KOU
THAT'S FINE WITH ME.
I DON'T WANT TO UNDER-STAND IT.
PRIN-CESS.
YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND HER PAIN.
TATARA.
I'M ALSO...


TATARA!
MY BROTHER--
SHURI...!
I'M...
..
OH, GOD...

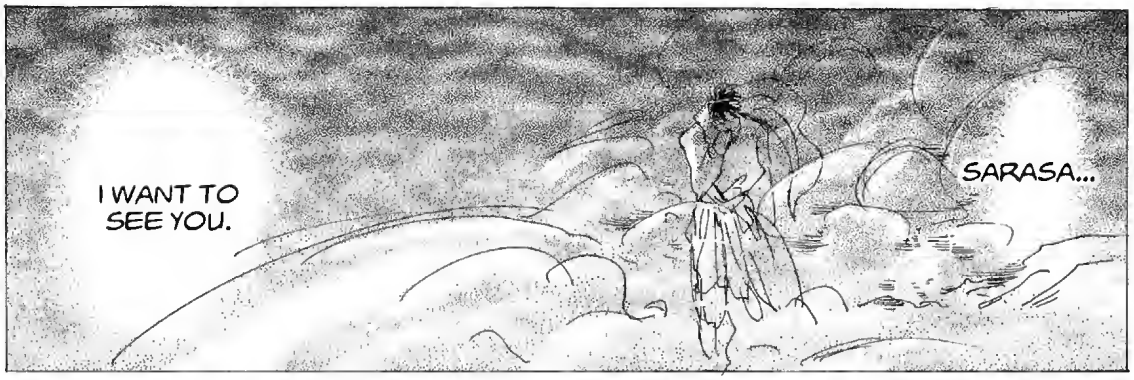


RAISE ANCHOR!
ZSSH
UNTIE THE ROPES!
THAT...
IDIOT!
WHAT'S SHE THINKING!?
TATARA JUMPED OFF!
WHAT!?
THE CURRENT'S PULLING THE SHIP! WE CAN'T GO BACK!
TATARA!
CHACHA! CHACHA!

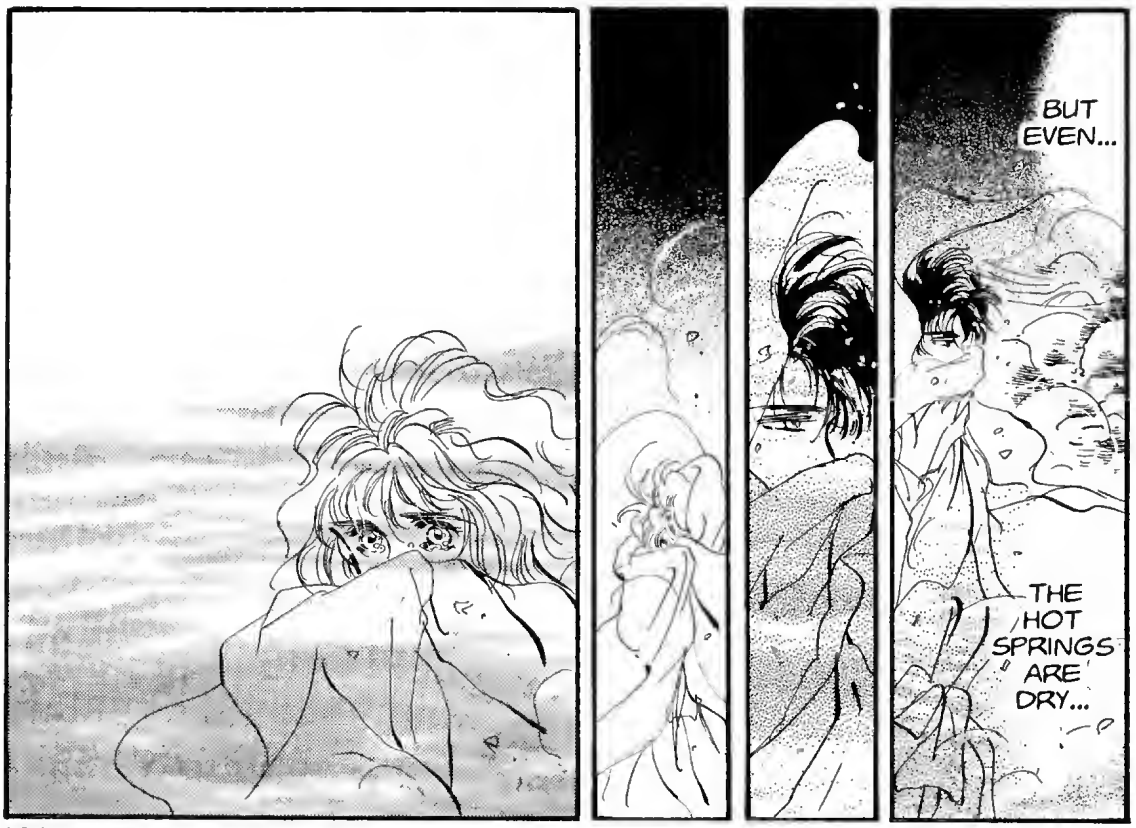
WHERE...
...AM I GOING?
TNK
KTAK
WHAT...
SHE
...AM I DOING?
ARE FROM THE SAND.
THE TEARS IN MY EYES...
...AM I DOING HERE...?
WHAT...


SHIDO...
YOU USED TO BE THE ONLY ONE.
BUT NOW...
FOR-GIVE ME.
IS THAT BECAUSE...
I'VE GROWN WEAK?
AM I WEAK, SHIDO?
THERE ARE OTHERS...
...I DON'T WANT TO SEE DEAD.

...IS NOW ONLY A DREAM.
OUR DREAM...
TO SEE CHERRY BLOSSOMS BLOOMING IN SUO...
HOOOO

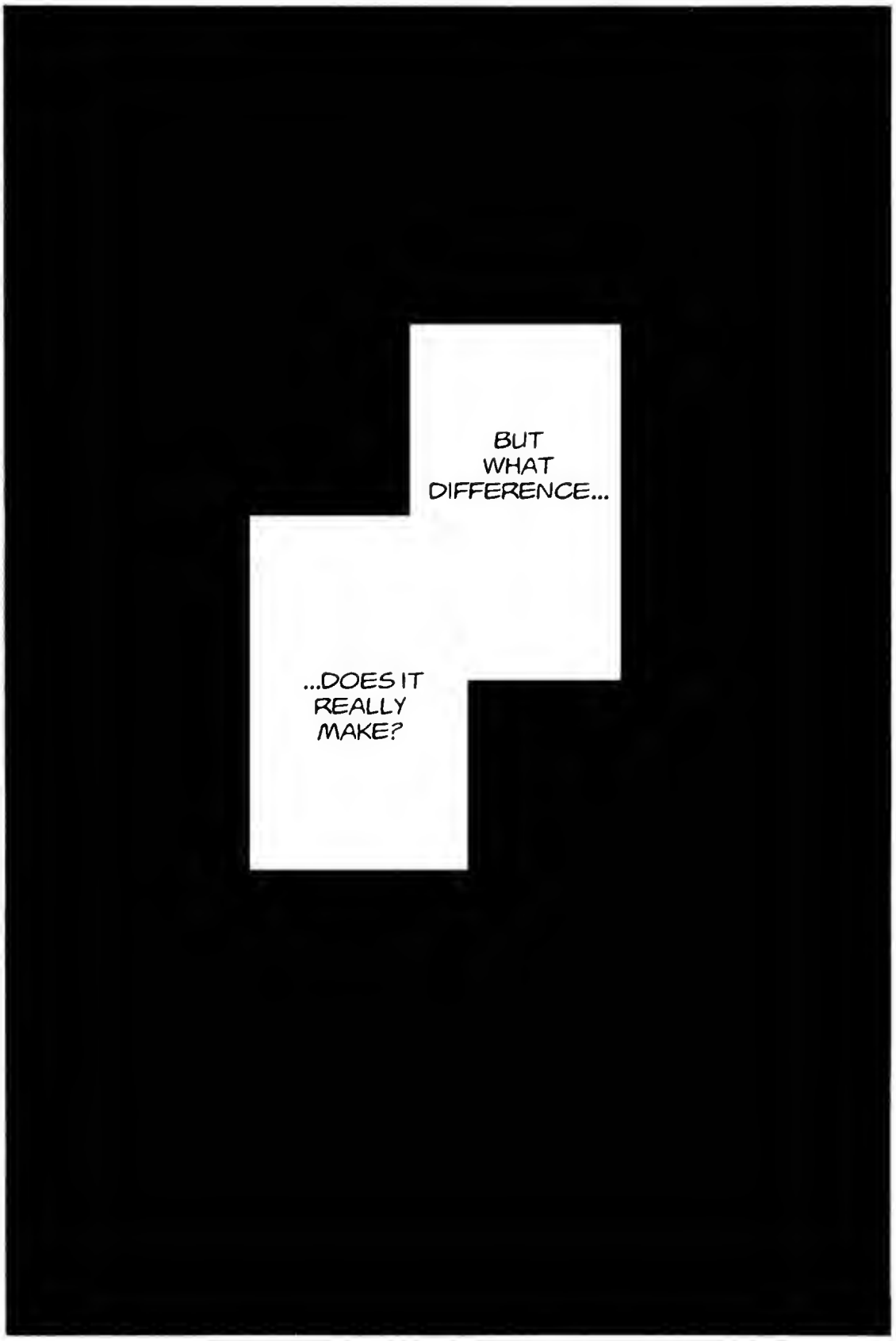

I WANT TO SEE YOU.
SARASA...

I WISH... I COULD SEE YOU...


BUT EVEN...
THE HOT SPRINGS ARE DRY...

WHAT IS HE DOING HERE?

HOW COULD SHE BE HERE?


BUT
WHAT
DIFFERENCE...
...DOES IT
REALLY
MAKE?

Recommendations

If you enjoyed this volume of *BASARA*, then here are some more manga you might be interested in:

Banana Fish

© 1987 Akimi YOSHIDA/ Shogakukan Inc.

by Akimi Yoshida: When a man is gunned down in the gang-infested back alleys of 1980's New York City, it sparks a complicated series of events that causes gang leader Ash to go up against mafia don "Papa" Dino. The series sends Ash and his allies across the country and against political intrigues in search of the truth behind the mysterious and deadly substance "Banana Fish."

Wild Com

© 1999 Yumi TAMURA/ Shogakukan Inc.

by Yumi Tamura: From *Basara's* creator, comes a trio of intriguing short stories. *Wild Com*'s heroine has a secret power. Somehow she must overcome her denial and learn to embrace her abilities. *The Beasts of June* is a dark little tale of people so far on the fringe of society they're barely human. *The Eye of the Needle* is a thriller about a rising star struggling with fame and a stalker. Each piece offers a different flavor of drama and action to satisfy a diversity of tastes.

Rurouni Kenshin

RUROUNI KENSHIN © 1994 by Nobuhiro Watsuki/SHUEISHA Inc.

by Nobuhiro Watsuki: A historical fiction like no other, *Rurouni Kenshin* is an action-packed tale of one man's struggle to atone for his past. After the bloody battles of the Bakumatsu, Japan achieved peace and prosperity in the Meiji Era. Yet what of those men who fought so fiercely for that peace? The vagabond samurai Kenshin has abandoned the violent ways to embrace the peace of the present, yet his past seems intent on not letting him go. This is martial arts manga at its finest.

Editor's comments

Since Japan historically has not been a country that relies on dairy foods, their selection of cheeses tends to be rather slim. Camembert, cream cheese and "pizza" cheese (shredded mozzarella) are the most common. Cheeses like cheddar are difficult to come by. Snow Brand was a famous dairy company in Japan. Due to a number of scandals, the company was dissolved in 2002.

Japan has countless kinds of pickles, and the vast majority have nothing to do with cucumbers. A traditional and healthy method of preserving food, there are many vegetables and fruits that are pickled-including plums, radish, eggplant and even turnip greens. Iso Jiman seems to be Tamura's favorite pickle company.

Furikake is a dried seasoning sprinkled over rice. There are many possible ingredients, including egg, salmon, sesame seeds, shrimp and the ubiquitous nori (dried, roasted seaweed). It seems Tamura prefers the simple combination of nori and tamago (egg).

Nescafé is a popular brand of coffee in Japan, one that probably goes well with chocolate. I wonder which brand of chocolate she likes?

What's Calcium Parlor? It's probably a supplement drink. The traditional lack of dairy food in the Japanese diet makes calcium a concern for health-conscious people. They make the tastiest supplements in Japan, so reaching your nutritional goals is seldom a chore.

Notice how, now that she's a sumo enthusiast, Tamura worked sumo into the plot? I doubt it's a coincidence. You might think sumo is all about bulk, so people like Nachi and Shuri wouldn't have a chance, but it's a sport of skill, strength and agility, not just heft. I wonder what she'd think of grand champion Akebono's recent appearance on WWF...

What's that Hijiri was singing? Made from old kimono fabric and thread, temari are balls made for children to play with. The craft of making them evolved into an upper class art with elaborate patterns made from the threads on the surface. Songs are often sung when playing with temari, much as children do when jumping rope. The particular song Hijiri sings has its origins in Kishu.

–PD